Famous Artists Course

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Famous Artists Schools, Inc.
Westport, Connecticut

lesson 10

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ROBERT FAWCETT   PETER HELCK   DONG KINGMAN

AUSTIN BRIGGS   HAROLD VON SCHMIDT

FRED LUDEKENS

These figures, in designed action and rhythm, emphasize the character of the picture's subject. This picture has variety within a compact whole. There are tensions and opposing lines working one against the other. There is a visual flow caused by a repetition of directional lines. There are opposing lines attempting to stop this visual flow. Woven into this intricate pattern is a human story that is readily understood. Study the skeleton diagram at the left to see the forces at work.

People in pictures

We cannot impress on you too strongly the importance of people in pictures because many commercial illustrations are composed entirely of figures. Some have additional forms to identify the scene; in others the figures are small and are surrounded by many other forms. So we want you to know how to paint pictures that are essentially figure compositions.

Study the pictures shown here and notice that most of the forms are figures. In each picture, the balance, space, motion, rhythm and emphasis are almost all contained in the figures themselves. When you compose pictures of this nature, the figure becomes a living, animated form to be arranged and directed by *YOU* in the activity it portrays. You also use the figure as a plastic form to arrange in a composition as you would any other form. The activity and the form should make a unit since all of the physical principles of composition must prevail. Just because you are drawing people does not mean that any of the factors — balance, space, tones, areas or rhythm can be ignored. On the contrary, they must be rigidly followed or the result will be a very poor picture. Do not become interested in the details and forget the composition. You must continually be conscious of overlapping, perspective, dark, light and tone, even when you compose only a single figure.

When you place more than one figure in a picture you must compose the two forms. Their sizes, positions and colors become important in setting up the proper relationship between them. This proper relationship will begin to influence the detail of either one or both of the figures. For example, the area of a woman's dress may be equal to the area of a man's suit. A change in size or an overlapping would alter this relationship and improve it. The arrangement may be further improved by a careful shifting of the degree of dark or light on one or both figures. The amount of light on the man's head or the intensity of the light on his shirt front — all of these and many more details are extremely important in achieving good composition when people are the major forms used.

The best approach to any composition with figures should have in it *simplicity and intensity as they relate to your idea. Simplicity* means to see the idea *FIRST* as a concentrated mass which will give it spatial unity. Then you should carefully organize and distribute the areas and detail within this mass. *Intensity* means the feeling of motion or mood — the human quality that is related to the idea and becomes an integral part of the composition. Your composition *must be vital* — it *cannot* be static.

STEVAN DOHANOS
The simplicity of this picture tells the story instantaneously; this composition gives your eye no chance to wander afield. It is a splendid example of simple, compelling space distribution directing attention to the action.

NORMAN ROCKWELL
A complete control of design, depth and emphasis are well demonstrated in this dramatic picture. See how the attitudes and character of the people are used to organize this composition and control the spectator's eye. Surrounding the central and predominant emphasis there are numerous experiences portrayed in the supplementary figures.

Every man on this boat is alive. There are many dark and light tones as well as various movements — yet all the figures stay on the boat. This solidity is the result of careful composition. This picture is a good example of having variety without destroying the unity of the mass.

ALBERT DORNE

Division of areas

When using people as forms, remember the fundamentals of composition. With your theme in mind you first divide the picture area *unequally* in a manner that you feel will give force to your idea. You now have two areas. Each of these can again be divided several times in the same manner, using figures or parts of figures to do so. This creates various qualities and forces that hold interest. This whole process could start from just *one line*, which may be your focal point. Your focal point may, however, be a dark, or a light, a rhythm, a direction or a motion that intensifies your theme or idea.

Whatever it is, don't lose it. As you begin to draw academically, the action or form

In these rough composition sketches we show how areas are maintained. The two examples above show different uses of the same area but you will notice that neither picture has destroyed it. In your work, remember to keep your space distribution obvious but not monotonous.

With the picture space divided into several parts, a more definite contrast of areas is possible. Although you do not follow the rigid division, you do maintain the essential unity of the space distribution.

Here, the horizontal line divides the space and, although it could be higher or lower it would seldom be used to divide the picture into two equal parts. The important thing is to hold the masses no matter how the division is made. One area balances the other and either may be dark or light.
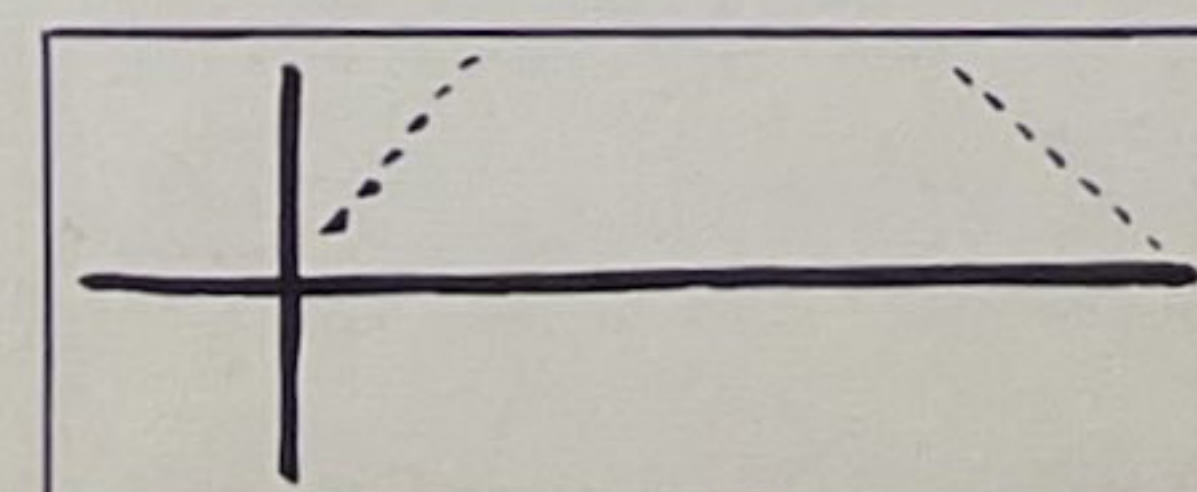
A diagonal division usually needs a compensating force to keep you within the picture area. This force can be very small — a line, a dot or a small tone may suffice. Study these examples carefully.

The horizontal division of space and tone in this illustration is nearly equal. Without the oblique vertical pattern of the bush and the diagonal shadow line on the wall in the upper right corner, this picture could be monotonous. These two diagonals offset the positive straight horizontals. By doing this, they make the horizontals apparent but keep them from becoming monotonous.

STEVAN DOHANOS

of the figure or figures may dictate changes. Try to accomplish these with a minimum loss of effective space division. Your final composition should have a compact, ordered unity; this does not mean a tight mass. It means that some basic, over-all unity has been established and maintained although it may be filled with intricate detail. Our best explanation of this is in the pictures, diagrams and captions on these two pages. Read and study them carefully. See how *areas are held as areas* to achieve a compact mass. The simplicity of such a mass gives force and intensity to the picture.

Dividing the areas within the subject

Within the simple mass area of a figure a further "composition" occurs. This composition is the arrangement of head, hands, clothes, wrinkles and hair within the area of the figure. Many times a figure represents a light, a dark or a tone in the composition. That tone or area must be kept. This does not mean that the figure should be drawn in tone. You can use solid black, in fact you may use it many times. Just do not let it become a mass that destroys the area. This can be avoided by using compensating light lines, textures or tones that, by acting as opposing forces, keep the black in position. Study the splendid example of this principle below in the illustration of Robert Fawcett. The mass of the figures is full of small areas of darks but the total mass is not destroyed.

ALBERT DORNE

This diagram shows how the darks have been distributed within the figures. It also shows their size and relationship to each other. These compensating forces give rhythm and unity; without them the figures would be gray and static.

Courtesy Insurance Company of North America Companies

The variety of textures, tones and accents are used here intelligently to give character and animation to the figures. The essential middle tone has not been destroyed. Notice how the middle tone balances the black of the chairs.

ROBERT FAWCETT

By permission Saturday Evening Post © 1948 Curtis Pub. Co.

The diagram of this illustration quickly shows the compositional structure. Each dark has been carefully placed and its area and relationship to the others has been considered. The lines and textures add force to the spatial unity and give articulation to the image, the space and the tone.

AL PARKER   Ladies' Home Journal

Achieving design with figures

The distribution of the darks, lights and tones sets up a series of related forces in all compositions. Dictated by the subject, the position and organization of these parts create a pattern or design. This pattern or design gives originality, emphasis and meaning to the picture. Achieving design with figures is important as it is a great help in getting across the idea you wish to express. Being an animate form, the figure can be moved almost at will, which allows the artist a great deal of latitude. Many times color or tone is used arbitrarily with figures; action is exaggerated and drawing is distorted. The originality of position of units of dark and light and the character of shapes and textures are two of the devices used to express a mood, a direction or an attitude. The co-ordination of all of these elements gives design to your figure composition. Design includes the two dimensional effects, as well as the three dimensional effect of your picture.
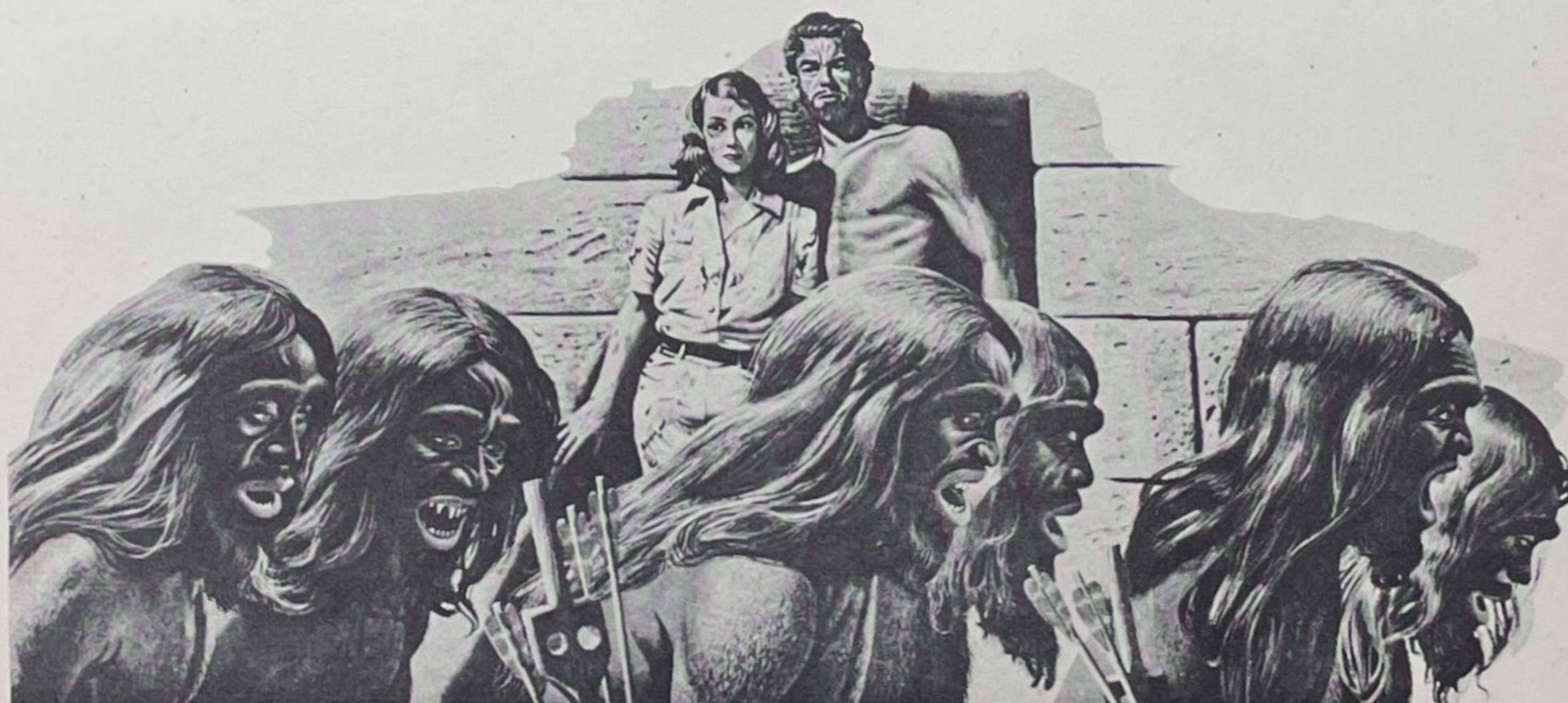

NORMAN ROCKWELL
Here, interesting shapes of tone and direction give force to an idea. At the same time, the consideration of the space area is planned to give design to the picture. The stripes of the socks, hat and belt form a texture that is balanced by the dark of the figure in back. This dark area is in turn carefully positioned to divide the background area unequally. The darks make the white suit stay in position.

ROBERT FAWCETT
The force of the position of the darks has a good deal to do with the impact of this illustration. The curve of the chair and the tilt of the heads emphasize the action and are carefully placed to give strong design to the whole picture. The contrast of dark and light is relieved by numerous textures.
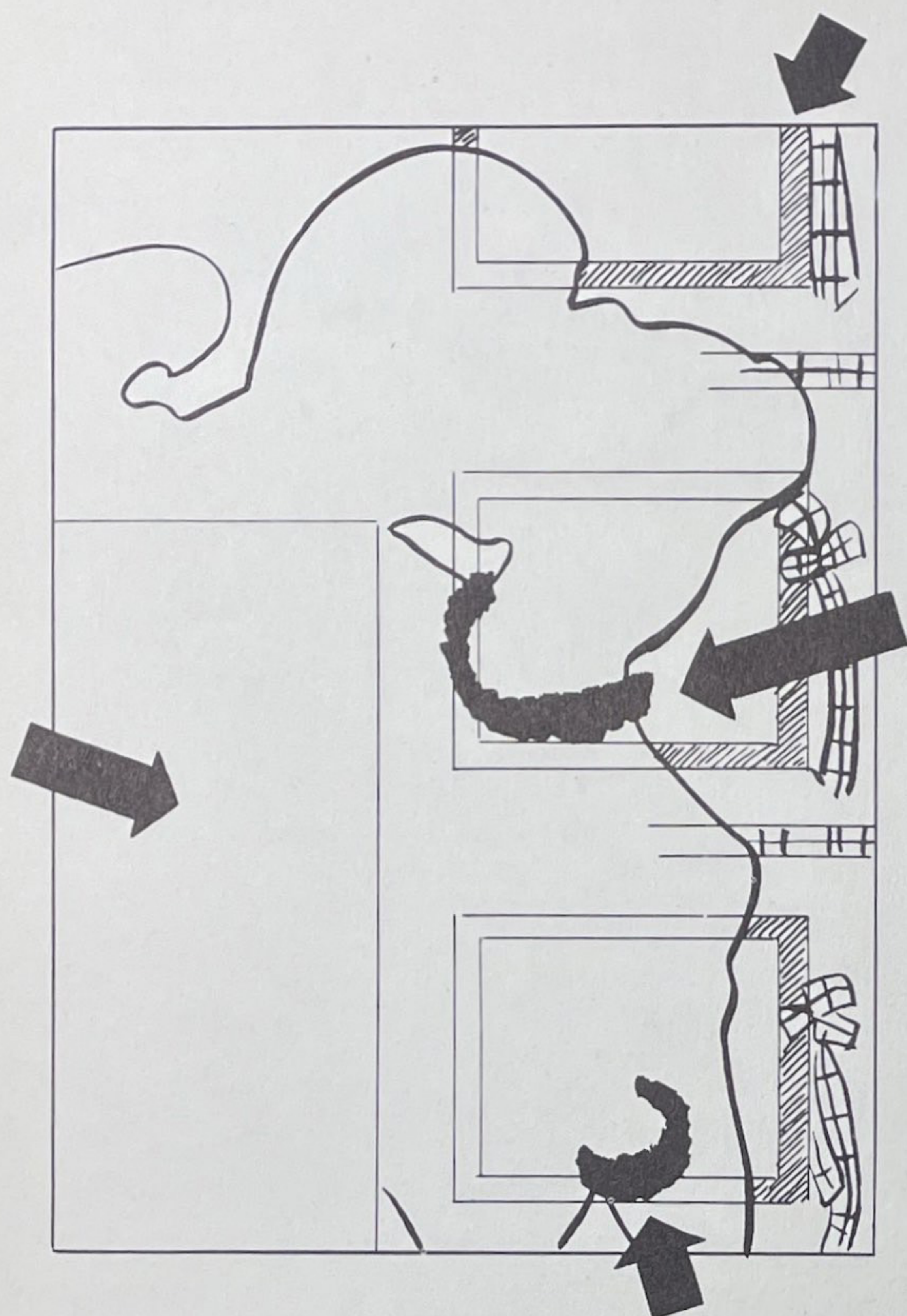

STEVAN DOHANOS
The menace in this picture is greatly emphasized by the design. Aside from the character of the foreground figures, the design of the darks and lights — their shape and direction — has added immeasurably to the success of the picture story. A glance at the diagram should readily point this out to you, although it is completely devoid of detail.

By permission Saturday Evening Post ©1939, 1940 1946 Curtis Pub. Co.

There is the minimum of accessories in this illustration. The picture concentrates on the two heads and their expressions. In the diagram at the left, we point out the props which add so much to the effectiveness of the illustration. They prevent the "bareness" that would result if just two heads were used. Notice how carefully the accessories are placed to add design to the picture **and the page.** The text panel is related to the pictures on the wall by being a repetition of their forms.

JON WHITCOMB

AL PARKER

Combining people and props

Endless variety is offered the artist by the use of supporting forms in a figure composition. Selection, view, size, texture, direction, tone, symbolism and character are but a few of the considerations you should give to these forms. Here is the ultimate in pictorial presentation. *The right props, correctly used, make pictures effective.* Bad prop selection usually means bad pictures. It is at this point in making a picture that your taste and judgement become all important because *only you* can make the selection, determine the size and the position of props in relation to the figures. No two artists will use the same forms the same way.
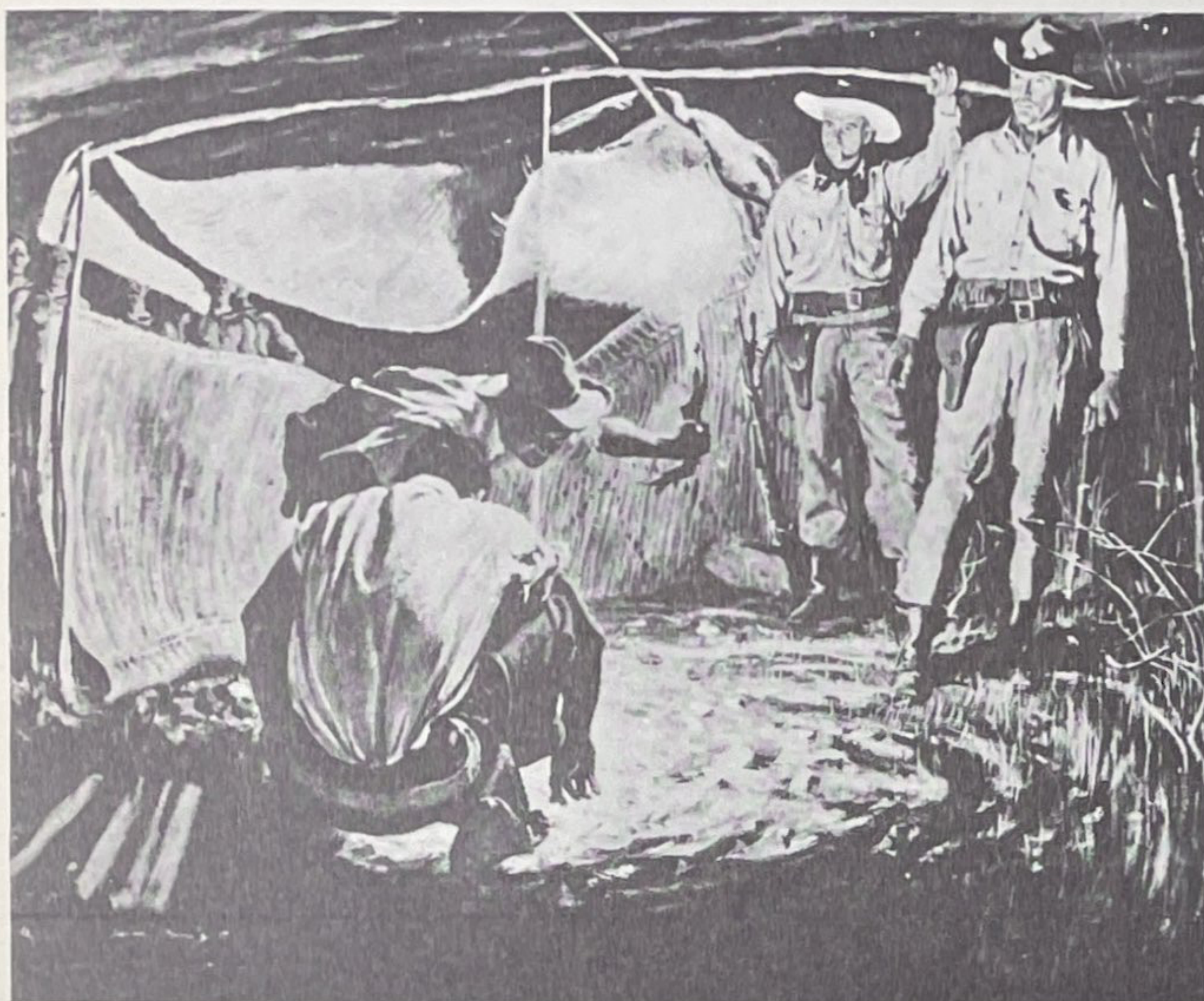
The relationships that are created by the use of forms orient the figure or figures and intensify the idea to be expressed. For example, you may view a chair in numerous ways. You must find the most effective way to relate it to the figure, the other forms and the picture idea. The view, size, tone, character, shape, and direction plus the composition, space, balance, rhythm, and design form a twofold consideration. A chair may be only an incident but it demands all of these considerations. Props are important. Select and use them wisely.

When you place props in a composition, their shape, size and position should be used to divide areas and at the same time give rhythm and balance to the picture. Notice how well the artist used them here to "work" for him. All forms have unlimited combinations of arrangements. You should try to get the best grouping for your idea.

Courtesy Ladies' Home Journal

AUSTIN BRIGGS

The rhythm in this picture is quite obvious. The movements seem to circle the static, foreground figure. This is an excellent example of the use of the forces of direction.

Rhythm and movement

You do not have to have figures in motion or in violent action to display rhythm. As long as your relationships are not static, you can have rhythm. In a picture, it can be implied motion of a figure, the interpretation of a rhythmic action, or it could be the rhythmic arrangement of the forms in your composition. It could be the rhythm of related or unrelated forces — the rhythm of dark and light — of repetition and direction — of balance and counterbalance. There is no absolute formula for getting rhythm into your picture. All of the above possibilities are considerations when composing pictures with figures. Consider them when combining figures with other forms. They can give your picture visual flow.

Movement, on the other hand, is a term usually applied to the physical motion of a figure. One moving force could demand a sharp counterforce to get immediate attention. Such a condition would create movement but not rhythm. Tension also could create movement. It could, but need not be, rhythm.

PETER HELCK   By permission Saturday Evening Post © 1946 Curtis Pub. Co.

The figures here are beautifully related to all of the forces of composition. The rhythm is in character with the activity of the figures. Pictures of this nature show careful thought in planning.

Emphasis — interest — focal point

Now we enter the field of immediate attention. A quick, positive communication is most important in the maze and turmoil of commercial illustration. Pictorially, only a limited number of units can be seen clearly at a glance and one can be seen quicker than two. Directional lines in composition can focus your attention. The darkest spot or the lightest spot can demand interest. The artist must use all the forces at his command to direct the spectator to the point of interest. The method of doing this can change with each picture problem. The most common methods used are intensity of tone, contrast, directional focus, linear movement and size. Most problems will be solved by the use of one or more of these devices. The determination of which method or combination of methods you will use is probably the most valuable use of the small sketch. Your field of vision is quickly widened by the use of small sketches and many experiments can be made rapidly to determine the best means of obtaining the desired emphasis.

The reader's eye is about fifteen inches from the page.
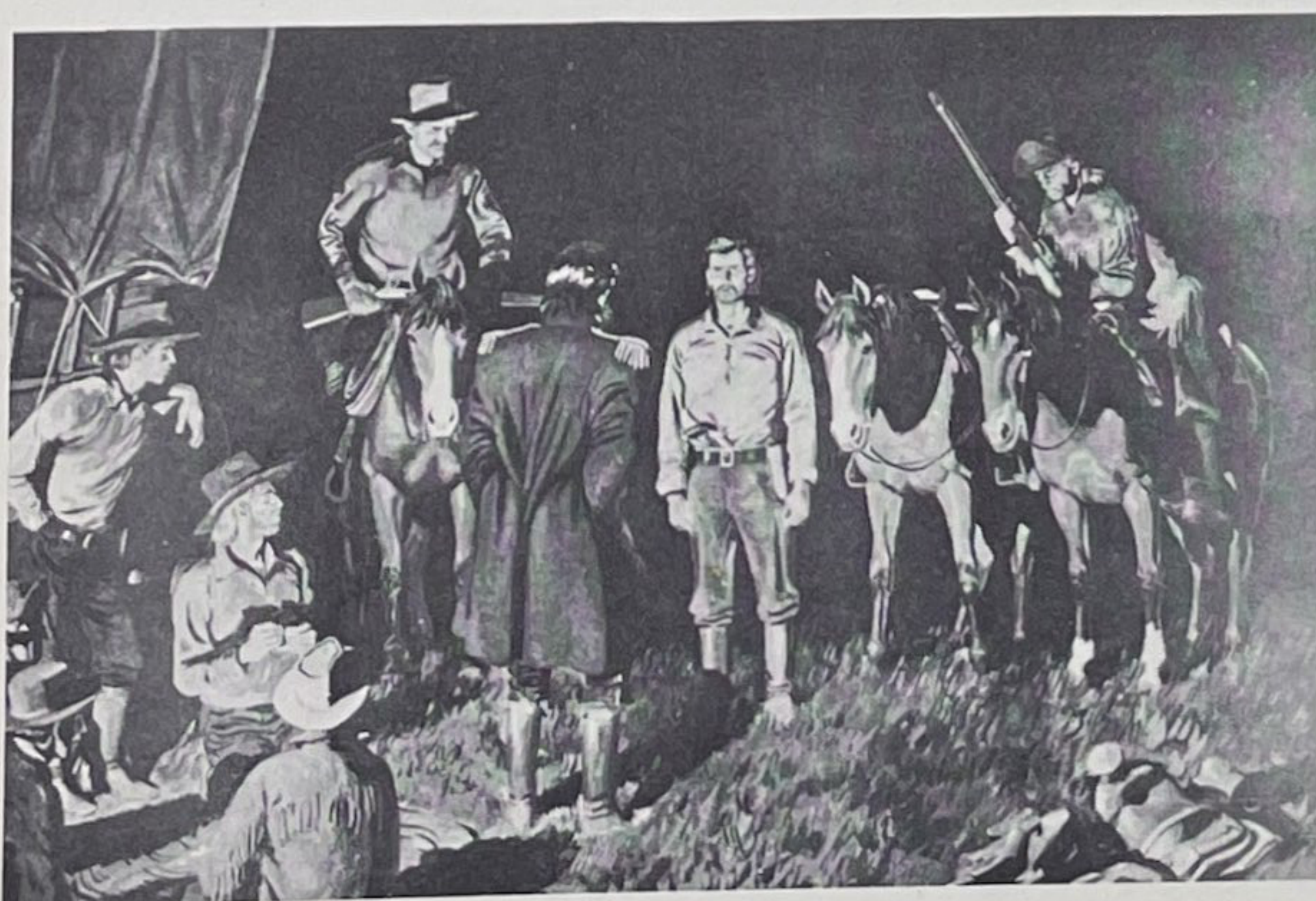

AUSTIN BRIGGS

All directional lines in this composition lead to the central figure. The focal point is the head. The position of the head in the total space area has been carefully planned. It is as strong as a black mass.

HAROLD VON SCHMIDT

Although the dark, central figure is no darker than several other figures in this composition, its position and surrounding light area give it tremendous impact. Notice how your eye begins to explore the balance of this picture from this point of contact.

FRED LUDEKENS

Here the emphasis is light on dark. All the forces of direction emphasize the light figure. All of the props "lean" into the central area of contact. Although there are places in the composition just as light in tone as the central figure, they are small in area and give balance without interrupting the direction.
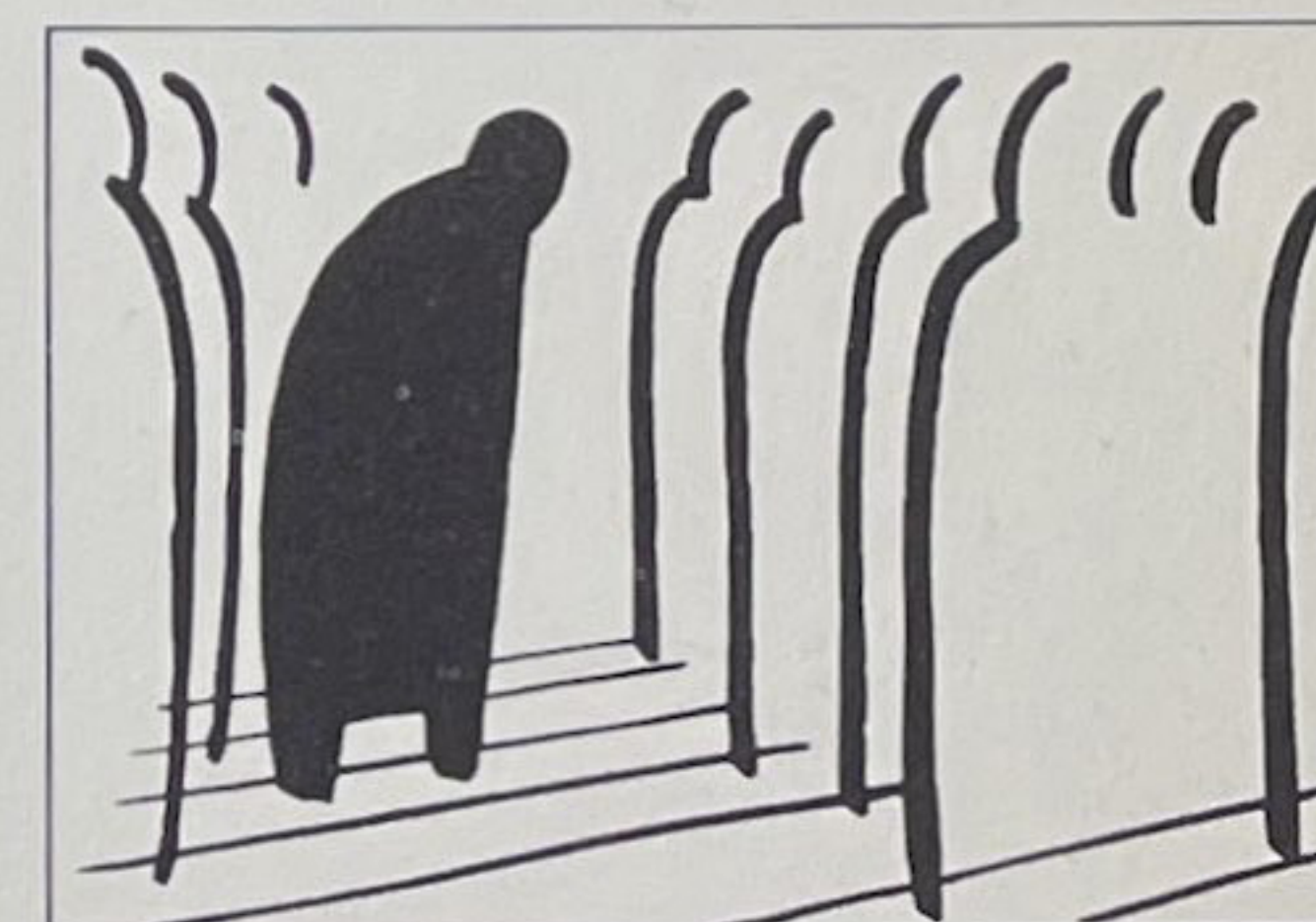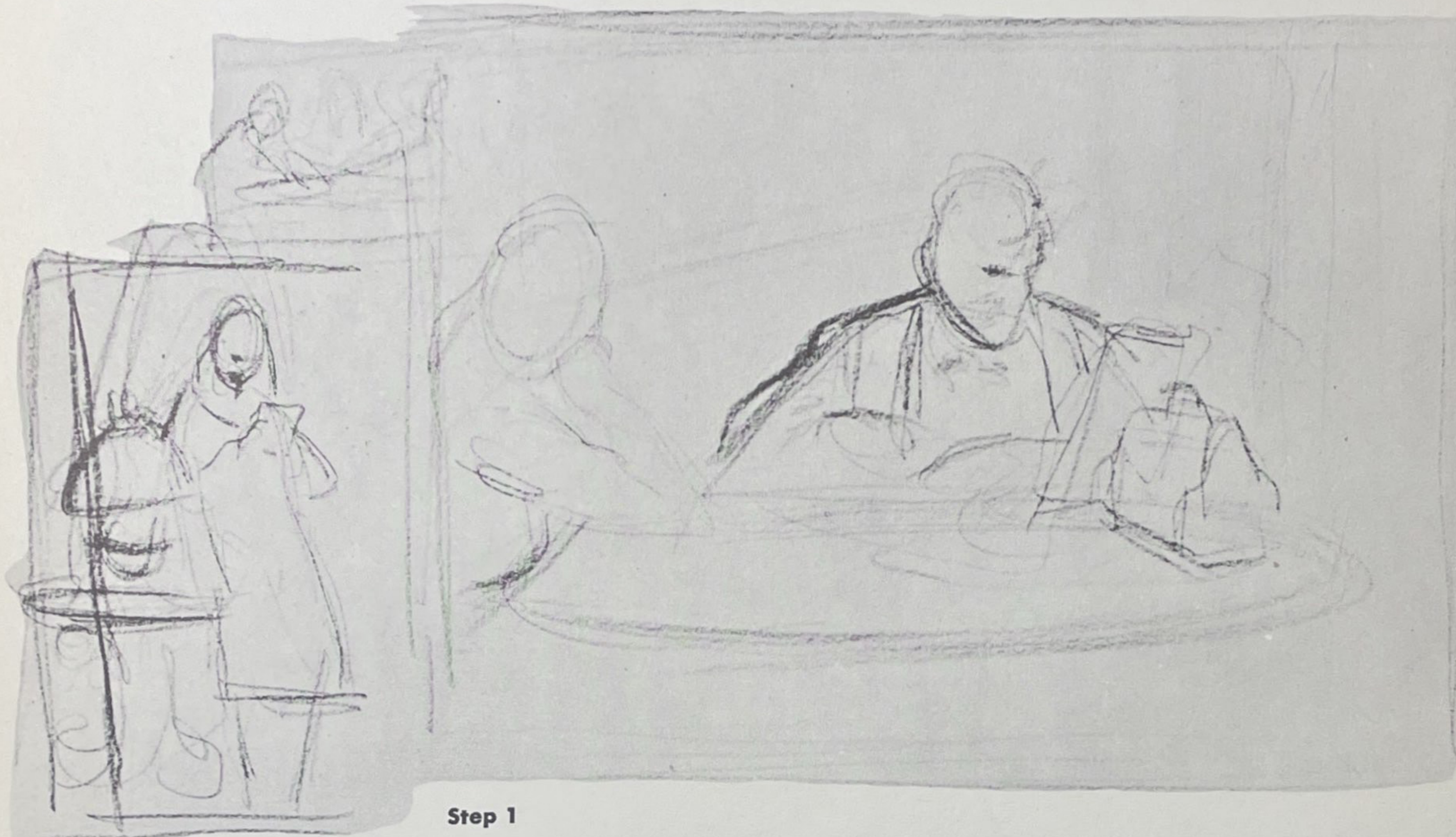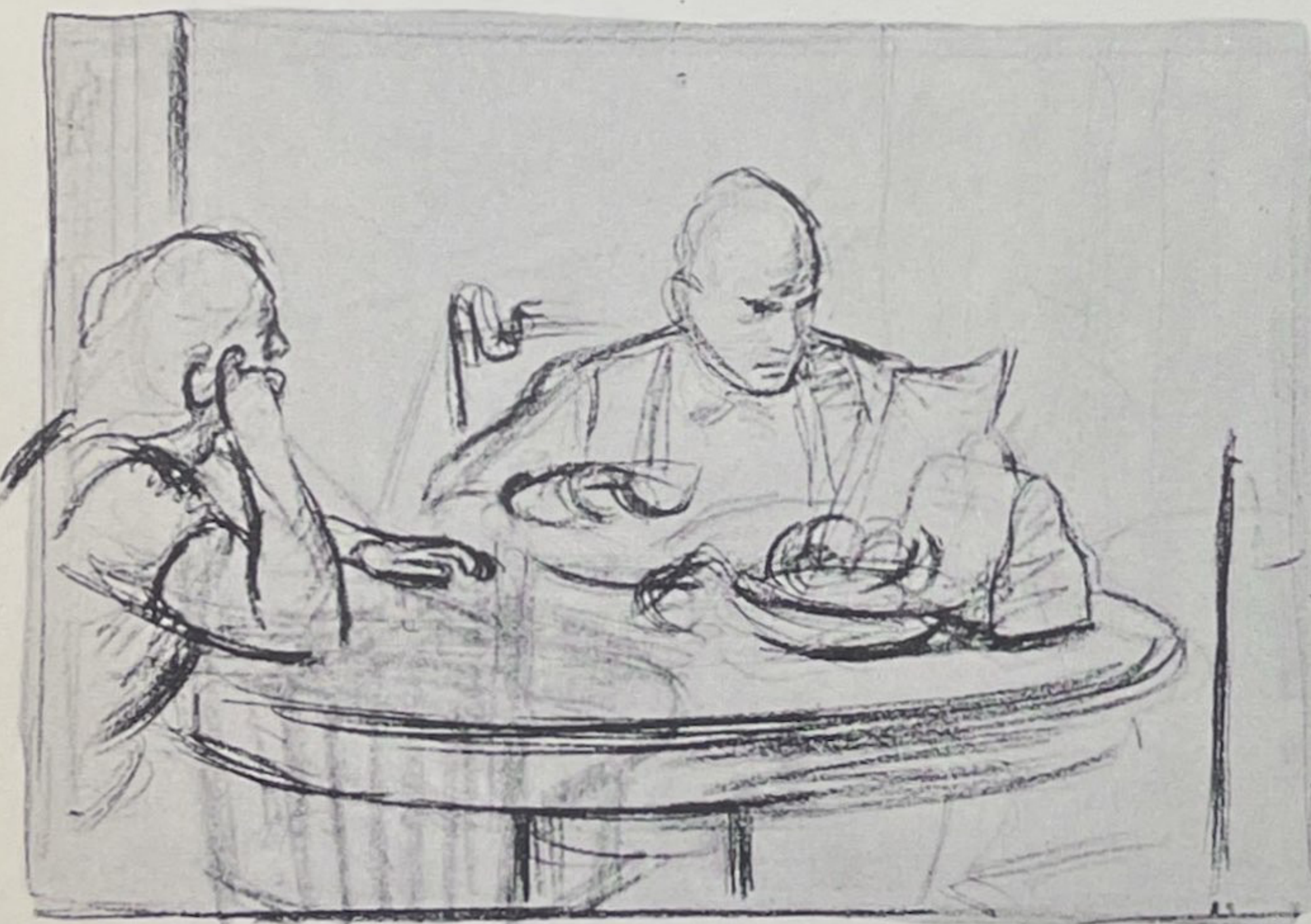
NOTE: On these two pages, Ben Stahl shows his method of procedure in composing an illustration. The text gives a running explanation of the thinking of an artist and the reasons for the various changes that occur during the process.

Step 1

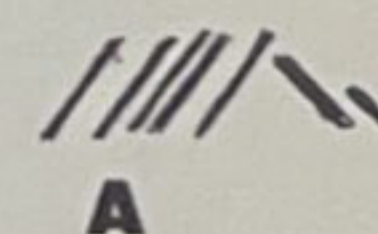**Step 2.**

How I compose an illustration– step-by-step

by *Stahl*

Step 1. Here is my first sketch for a Maxwell House Coffee advertisement. Notice how the gesture of the man's head is established with an oval plus a few dots and lines.
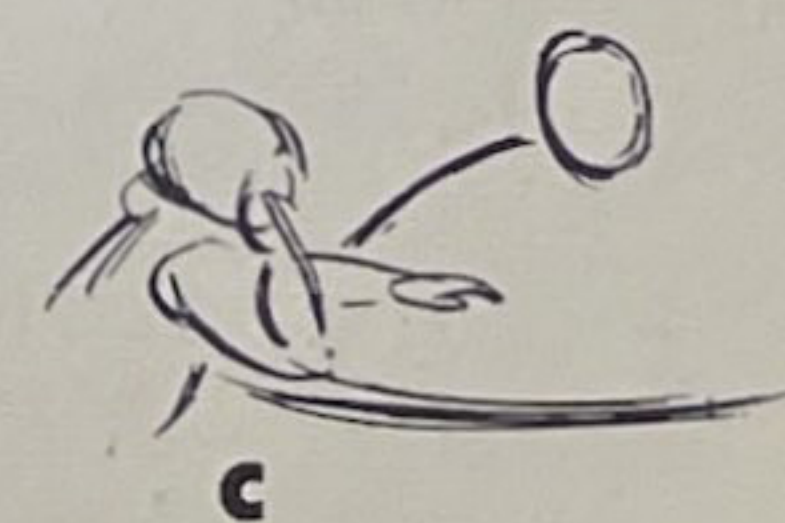
Step 2. At this stage, I have carried the composition a little further. Every line placed on paper relates to and harmonizes with another line or opposes another line to add strength to the composition. (See diagram A on opposing lines.) A little tone is used here to stress form, not pattern. At this point, I do not worry too much about the technical accuracy of the props. That can come later when my composition problem is solved. By using this round table, a rotating action is set up, only to be visually stopped momentarily by the chair back (diagram B) and then go on. The woman's outstretched left hand ties her form in with the man's (diagram C). The line above the woman's head is placed there to give the woman's figure more stability and to provide a necessary rectangular shape. I tried to place a chair in the foreground, but, at this point in the picture, it was too heavy. The line at the lower, right-hand corner was needed to serve as a counterbalance and is indicated strongly. When feeling your way through a composition problem, draw gently but when you're certain you're right, make a vigorous statement. I consider the table
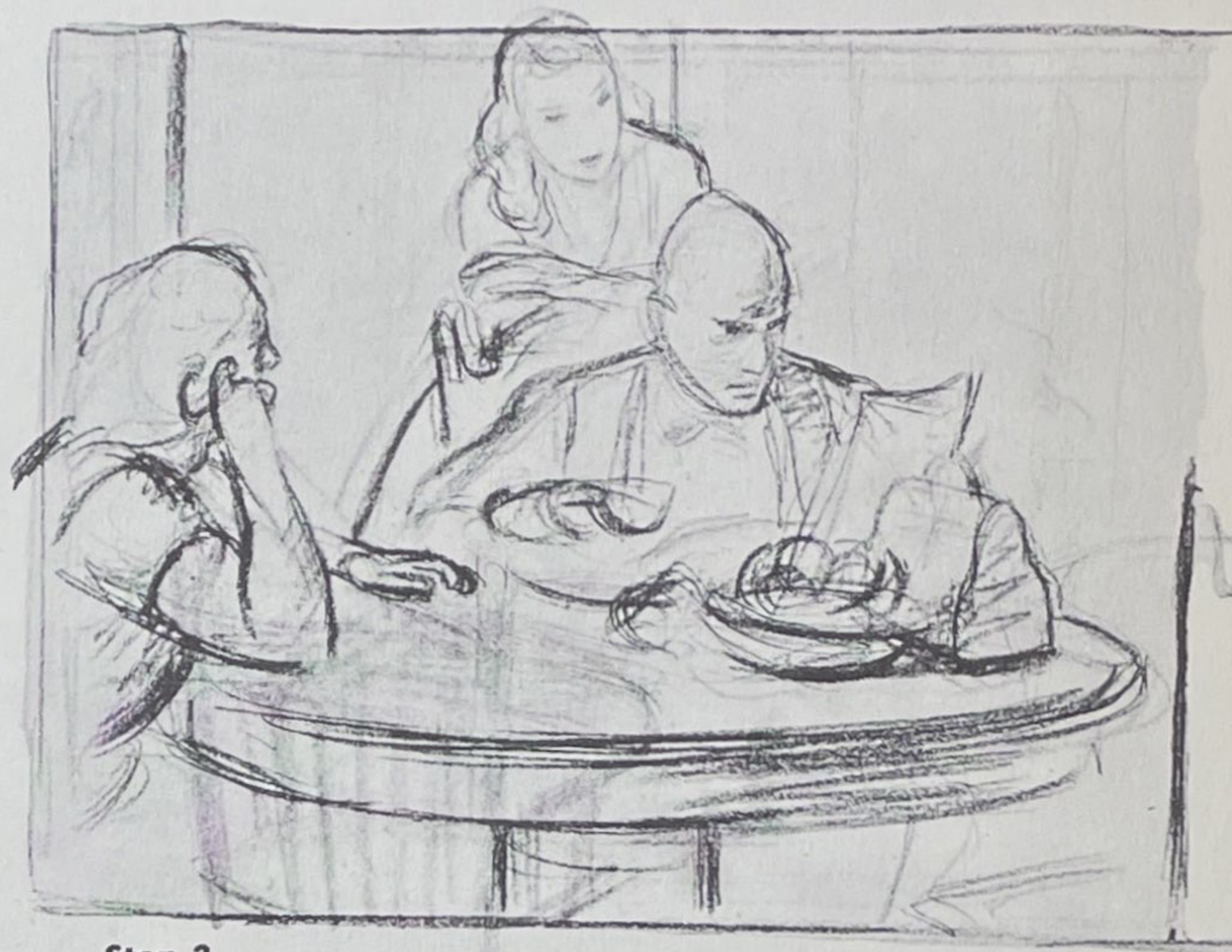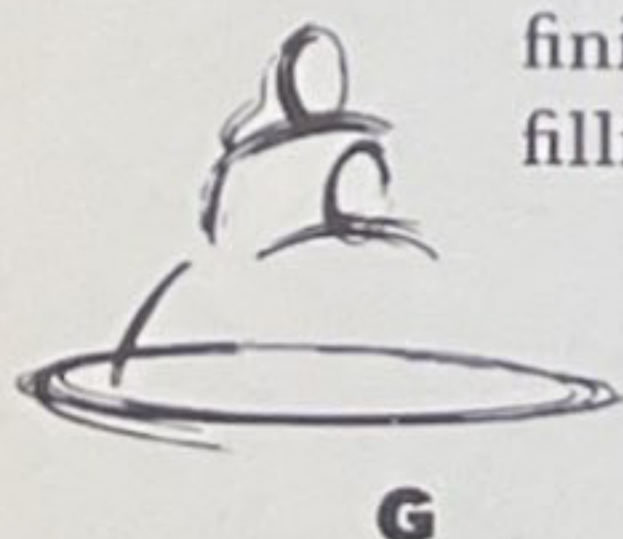

A

B

C

D

E

and the man as a unit (diagram D); the woman and the rectangle above her are another unit (diagram E). The unit of the man and table contain active forms; everything outside that unit is held compositionally simple. To begin a composition, search for a theme — the theme of this picture is "circular movement" (diagram F). The ease with which you work out your theme depends on how well you draw.

Step 3. The girl leaning on the chair has "grown out" of the form of the man. Her pose, everything about her form, resulted from the other forms in the picture, and the lines of her body harmonize with the picture's circular theme. The shoulder lines of both the man and the girl follow the invisible curve of the table (diagram G). This shows how line is built on line; form on form. At this stage, eyes and mouths are symbols because of their locations in the picture. If they were elsewhere, they would be merely scrawls. They are indicated here for placement and can be easily changed or developed into their final shapes. A vertical line is placed above the girl's shoulder to stabilize her form. In creating a composition, be concerned with the large, simple shapes, don't get involved with details of the shapes. Keep the general tone of your lines the same and if you must accent, accent an entire line or area. In drawing a figure, it is easier to first draw the head, body, hands and feet, *then* the legs and arms than it is to draw the head, body, arms, legs, hands and feet in that order. The same thing applies to the drawing of a gesture. Draw the start and finish of a gesture and it will be complete (diagram H). The filling in can be done later.
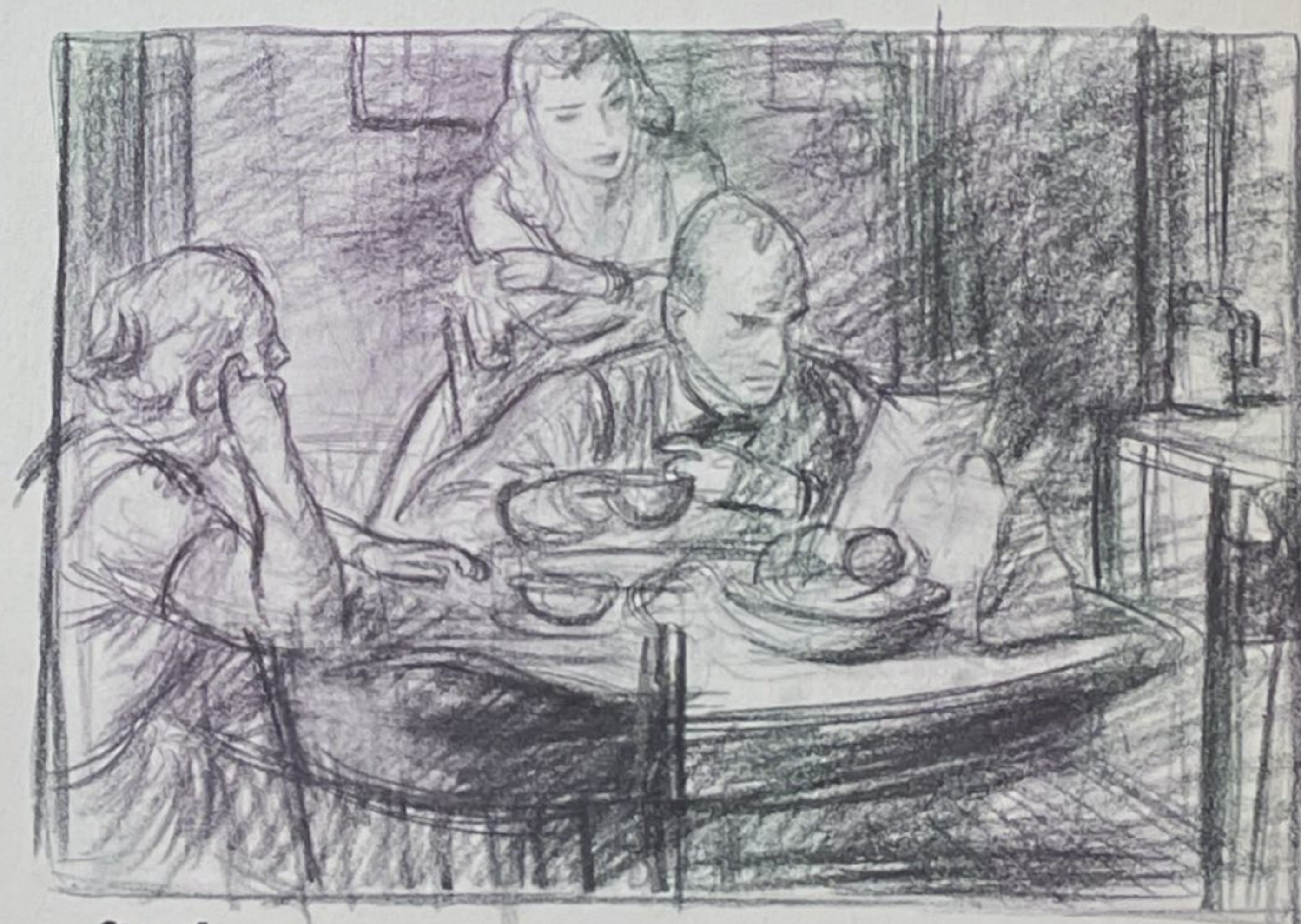

F

Step 3

G

H

Step 4. I have added tone here and the chair is again introduced now as a tone balance for the girl's figure. A picture must balance so well that even if it were turned on its side (diagram 1) it would still "balance." That is why the horizontal line to the left of the girl's head is so important. In addition to balancing, a picture must be well designed in depth. An arrangement of forms in a picture must be like a sculptured group — pleasing when viewed from any angle. If you keep this principle in mind, your compositions will never look uninterestingly flat.
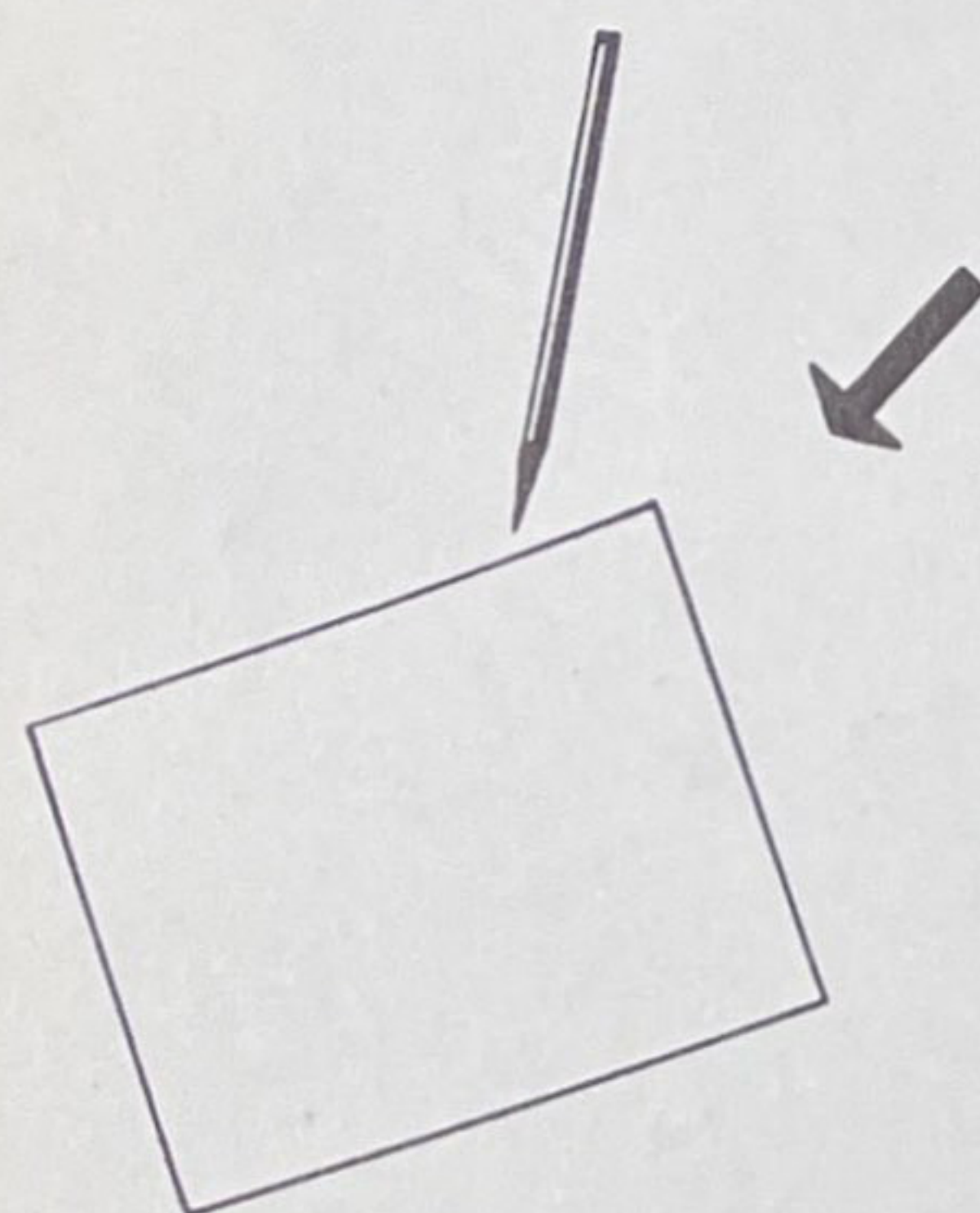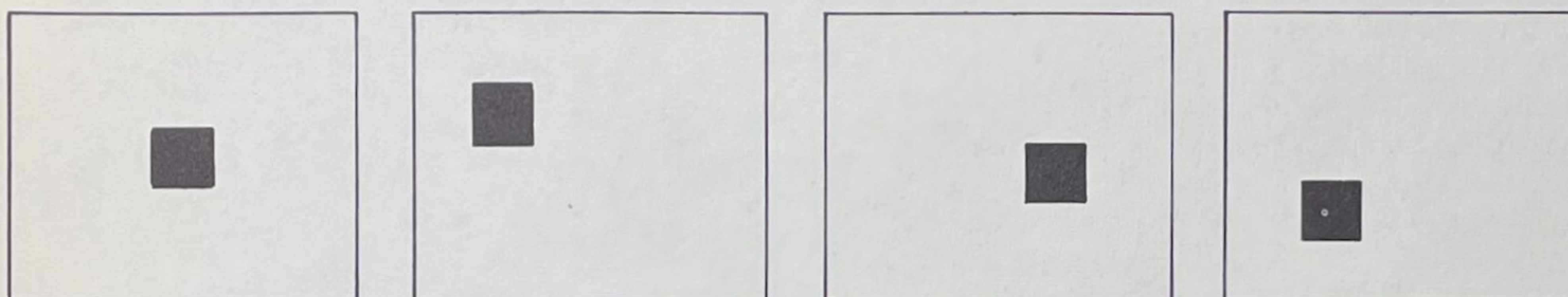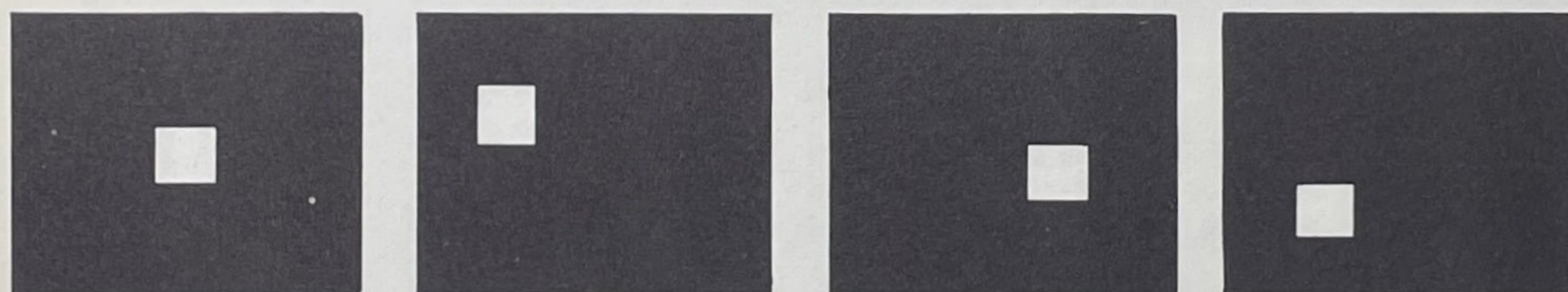

I

Step 4

Dark and light and space

The moment a mark is made on a piece of paper you have established a dark and light relationship. Simultaneously, the dark creates a feeling of space. If the size and position of the dark changes, the effect on the observer's eye also changes. By shifting the position of a small dark area within a light rectangle, innumerable space sensations occur. If this should be reversed — that is, if a white spot were placed in a dark rectangle — a completely different feeling would occur even though the sizes and positions of the spots and rectangles remained the same. If the tone of the spots or rectangles changes, innumerable other combinations are established. The slightest change in tone or position produces something different. We bring this to your attention so you can realize how intricate this can be when anatomy, composition, rhythm, action and mood must _all be combined_ to form a unified picture. The problem is not unlike that of a composer writing a symphony for dark and light are, to the artist, like notes to the composer.
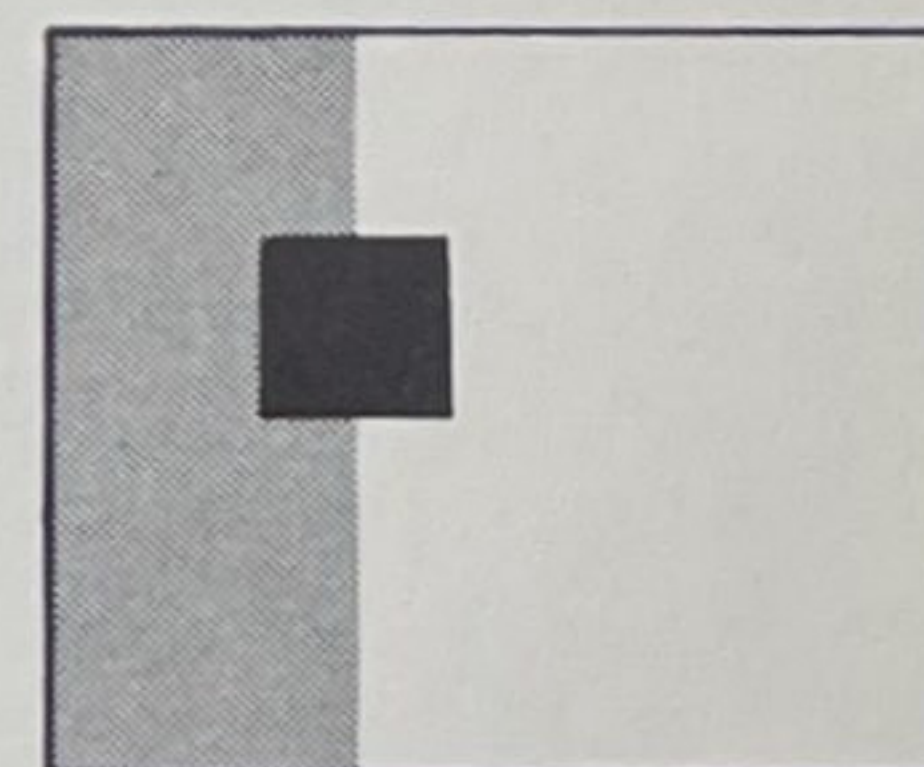
We might say it another way. Dark and light are what you build your picture with. You use dark and light to draw forms, to make designs, to create mood, to make compositions, to define light and shadow — _in short to accomplish anything that has to do with drawing_. The relationship of dark to light is the tool of your expression. It is a tremendous subject. We will bring it to you as simply as we know how. We will break down its uses into the most important categories. You will see that each category is, in turn, related to the others — and all of them will usually be present to some degree, in a final picture. It is _important for you_ to understand each category to make effective pictures.
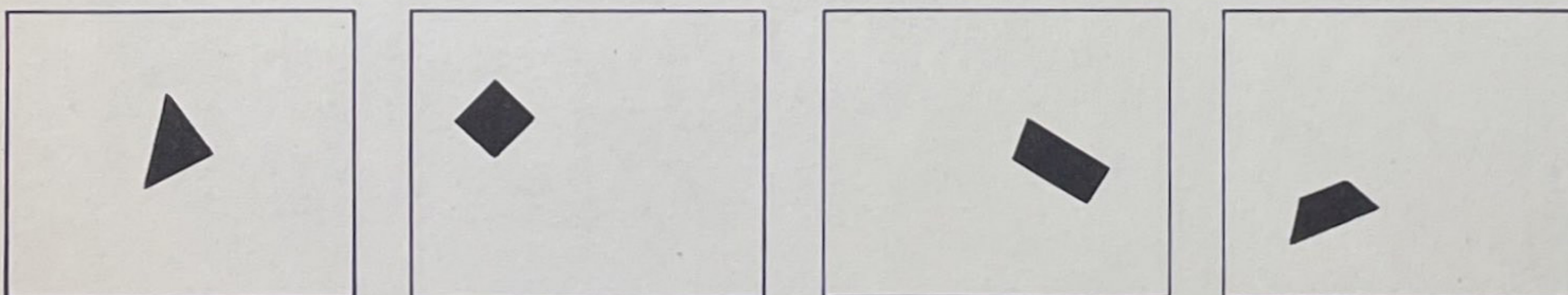
We have placed a small black square in a different position in each of these rectangles. Each square is the same size. Notice that each rectangle with the black square has a totally different feeling of space. This occurs as the position of the black square changes. These diagrams demonstrate that the placing of darks in areas is important to your picture. A slight shift of position will create a different optical experience. You must experiment with the placing of objects in areas to get the feeling you want.

These white squares are the same size and in the same position in the black rectangles as the black squares are in the white rectangles above. Notice how different these appear. This is because a large area of black has an entirely different quality and effect than a similar area of white. When you arrange tone in space, a definite psychological effect is produced in the observer. Try to have this produced effect in keeping with the subject you are drawing.

Here is something entirely different just because we took rectangle #2 at the left and added tone to part of it.

Here we have changed the black square to a different shape in each rectangle. In size, they are all about the same and they are in the same position as the black squares are in the above rectangles. This demonstrates how a **change of shape,** with no other change, seems to greatly affect the feeling of the entire area. Art is delicate. You can't change shapes and areas at random. If you do, you will seemingly alter all the other parts and the total effect.

AL PARKER   McCalls

Note

This diagram is shown up-side down in an effort to help you see the abstract positions of the areas of dark and light and tone.

This small black ac-cent acts as a foil to the other large areas.

The dark hair is the focal point.

This dark coat and the dark, upper left-hand corner (child's shoes) balance the dark hair of the child. Each dark area has a different size and shape which gives interest.

The light, suggested pattern of a brick wall is a contrasting texture to the ostrich plume hat and the flat clothing. Such contrast helps to empha-size the quality of each area.

Here is another area and another tex-ture which differs in size and shape from any of the other parts of the pattern of tones.
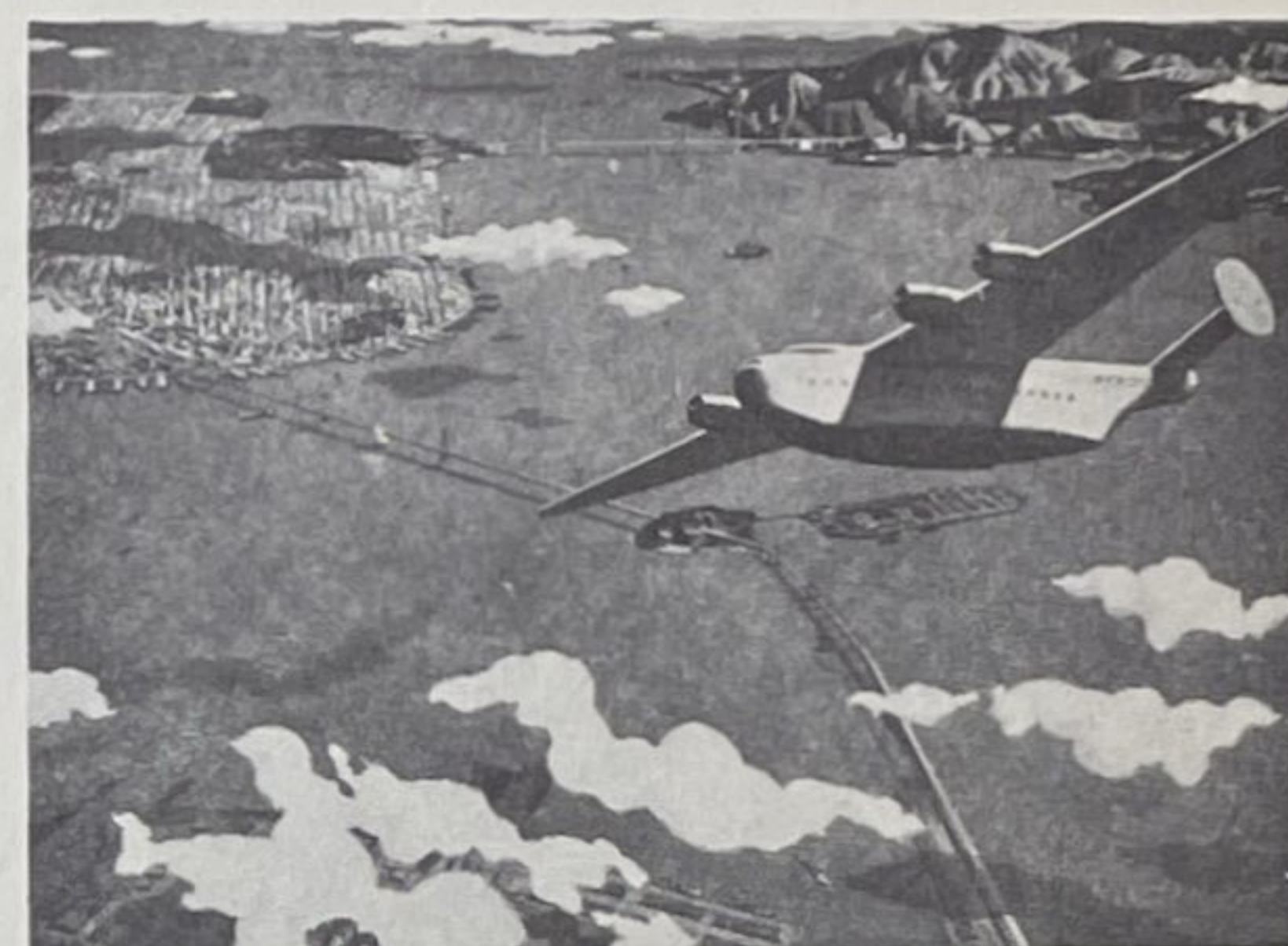
Abstract use

The word abstract as used here means *a composition of dark and light that is characterized by little or no reference to the appearance of objects in nature.*

Darks have a great influence in the design and organization of most pictures. In drawing, you usually start with a light paper and use a dark medium — ink, pencil or charcoal. It seems natural to build with the dark. As you begin to draw with a subject in mind, a simple composition of abstract shapes can start the structure of your picture. Here you start to achieve the rhythm, balance, direction and emphasis that we have taught you in the lesson on composition. If you will refer to pages 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 in this lesson and study the diagrams again, you will see how the placing of the darks have a positive relation to the rhythm, emphasis, mood, space, design and balance of a picture. Notice how the shapes and tones create interest in themselves.

The good artist makes this abstract "pattern" work for him by making it fortify the effective-ness of the subject. The best pictures are those in which the artist has shown force and originality in the use of the abstract "pattern."

Commercial illustration is primarily a pictorial record of a subject or a situation which is, many times, only of momentary importance. However, the illustrations with the best, abstract placing of darks, lights and middle tones are the pictures that give the strongest impression to the spectator for the longest time.

In a picture, the subject strongly influences the organization of the abstract design. Nevertheless, *you,* the artist, are the one who must conceive the view, the size, the tone value, the source of light, the rhythm and the emphasis that make up the picture. Your concept will, to a great extent, govern the abstract design. When you begin a picture, you should have an image in your mind from which to start your composition. As you proceed, you will no doubt shift from one sketch to another, trying many ways to do the subject. It is this shifting and experimenting with the shapes that will begin to suggest the most effective design. Settle on one that has the most feeling and begin to work it up in more detail to see if you can *retain what your creative start has suggested.* If you can emphasize your idea in this concept, *retain the positions of the darks and lights* and you will usually develop the small sketch into an interesting picture. Try it. See for yourself how abstract shapes give pictorial unification.

FRED LUDEKENS   Courtesy Californians, Inc.

The abstract pattern is black and white on a middle tone. Notice the balance of black and the rhythm of the whites in the diagram. Each black differs in size and shape to give interest.

AUSTIN BRIGGS

In position and strength, this spot becomes the focal point.

These light spots break up this large area and keep it from becoming monotonous.

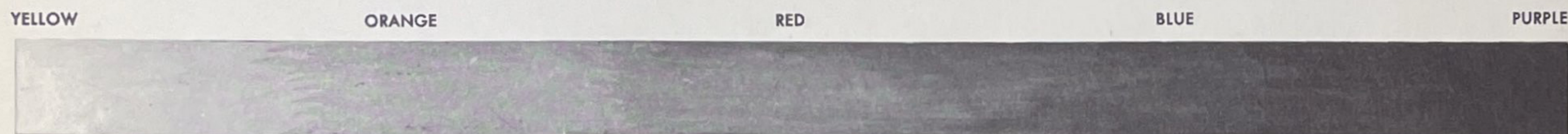We have turned this diagram on its side.

A dark area like this gives the proper tone to the smaller details. It unifies the total arrangement by weight and position.

These two lines are parallel. Each has small supporting shapes that keep your eye interested and never let it leave the area of the picture. The lines are important be-cause they give unity in a picture containing many small shapes and tones.

YELLOW   ORANGE   RED   BLUE   PURPLE
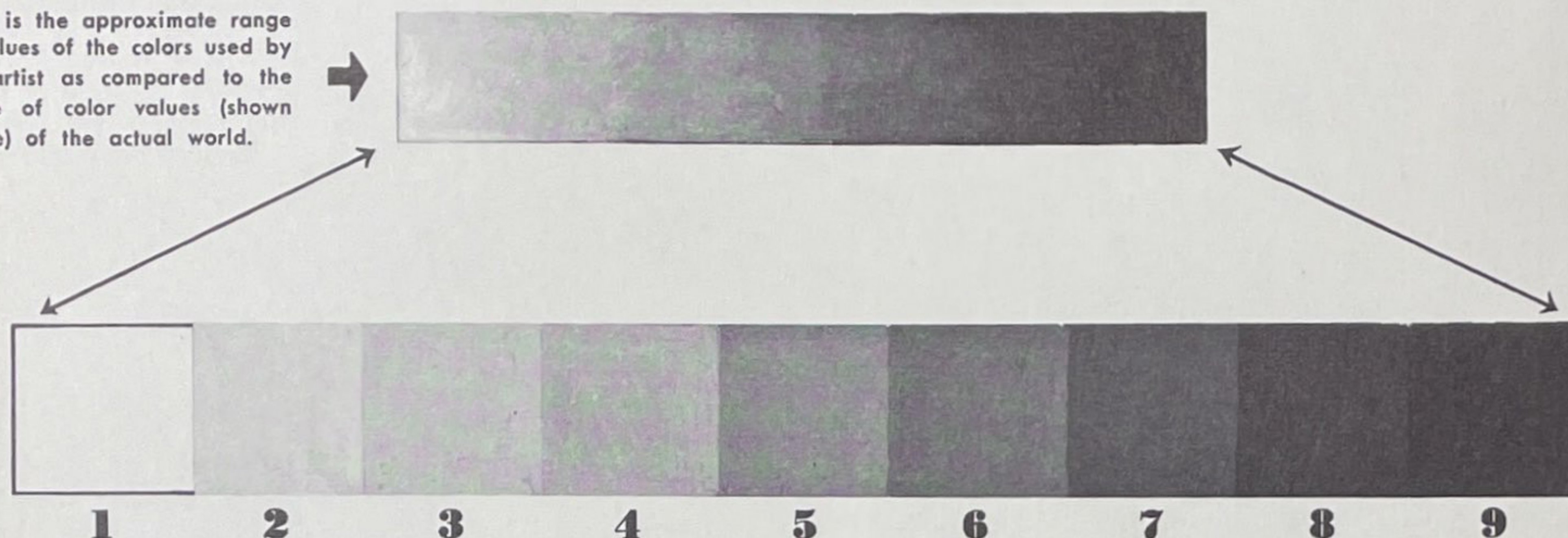
In nature, the range of color and light is greater in intensity than can be gotten with pigment, but these tones approximate those found in nature. In natural tones, the difference ranges from the brightness of the sun to total darkness.
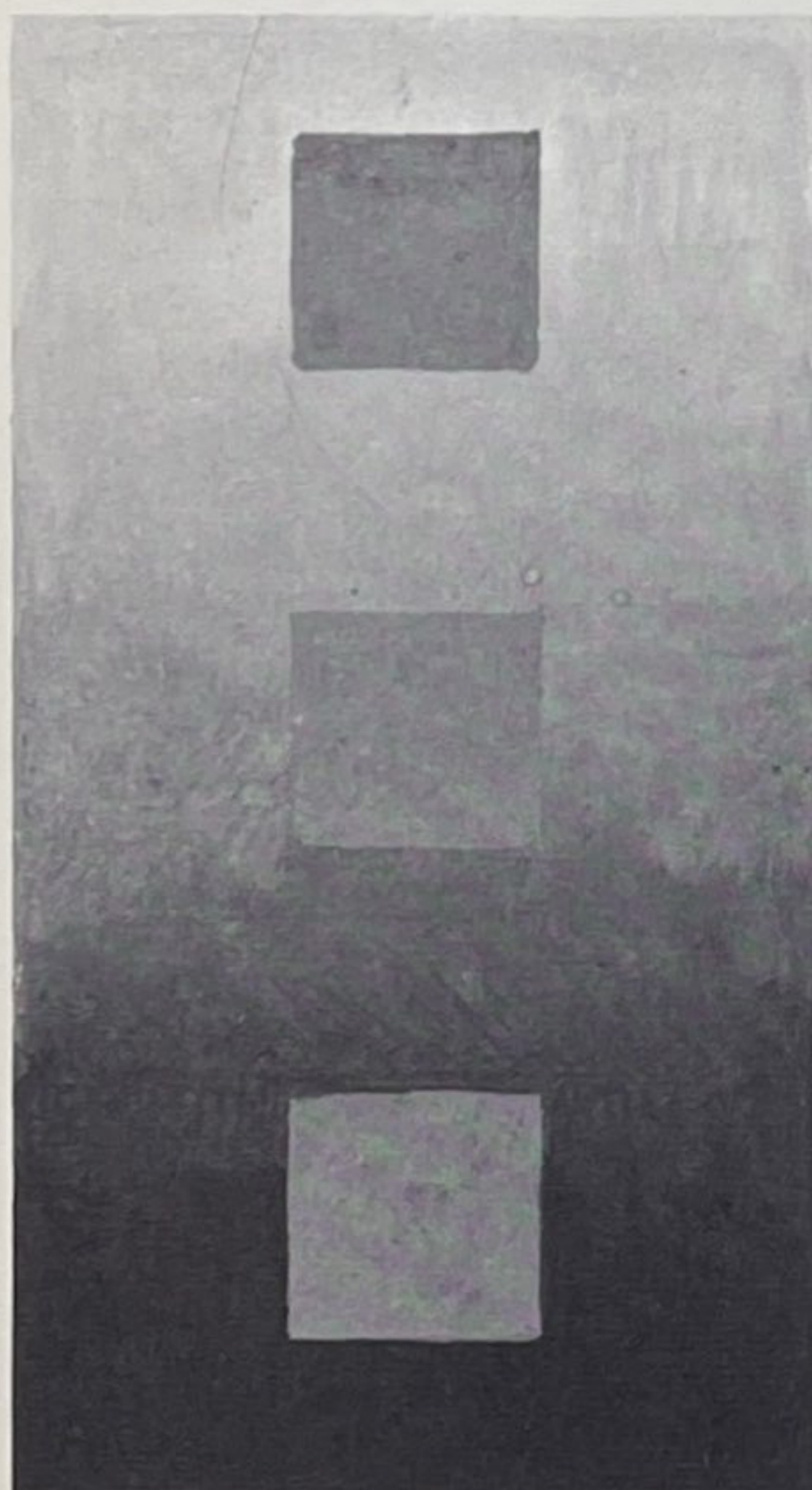
Here is the approximate range of values of the colors used by the artist as compared to the range of color values (shown above) of the actual world.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |

We have widened this chart for working purposes and the numbers are for reference only. All tone or value is an interpretation of color or light. For our purpose, we are showing only nine different values for simplification and clarity.

5

Each square is a half-value, (number 5 on the above chart). This demonstrates how a gray can appear to be light or dark— depending on how it is used.

Use of tones and values

The professional artist is not always fortunate enough to be working in color. He must sometimes find a tone or value in black and white that successfully interprets the actual value in nature. In the actual world, the intensity of light and dark is several times greater than that which can be found on an artist's palette. As we have told you many times, *everything in drawing is relative. With white and black paints we interpret tone and color.* All of the tones of gray from white through black are *VALUES*. This means these tones have a *VALUE* either to the dark or the light, to the actual color of an object or to the intensity of the light falling on an object. These tones, from white to black, are a series of *related* tones called *VALUES*. Usually when an artist says a part of a picture is "out of value" he means that it does not keep its correct interpretive position in the picture or does not properly interpret the tone of the object it is supposed to represent. *VALUES, THEREFORE, ARE RELATIONSHIPS!*
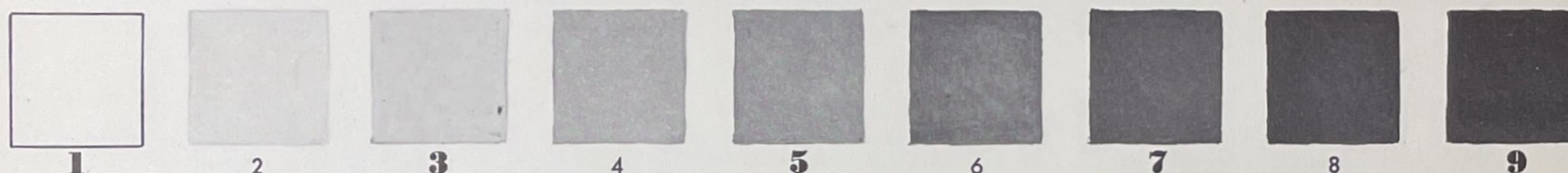
An object in normal light can have a dark or a light local value. For example, a piece of coal is dark, a pine board is light and so on. As objects or forms are pictured in different light — sunlight, artificial light, moonlight, dim light, etc. — the relative tone or values of the parts change. A set of values occurs. For example, a white shirt front in a dimly lighted room could be a value as dark as No. 7 in the value scale. The head of the figure wearing the shirt could seem to disappear into the background — or into shadow. If the value of the shirt front appeared too light to hold its correct position in the picture, or in the figure, it would be *OUT OF VALUE.*

Values also play an important part in composition and design. In some pictures, light values dominate, in others, middle or dark values dominate. This does not mean that the pictures do not contain any white or black. It simply means that the over-all effect is that of a certain value.

In design, tones are related abstractly — that is, they set up a series of balances and counterbalances among themselves. This abstract relationship adds interest to the two dimensional quality of a picture. These tones can give rhythm, direction and contrast as well as being related to each other in position and area.

In a later lesson, the details of drawing and painting in tone will be covered.

Value chart

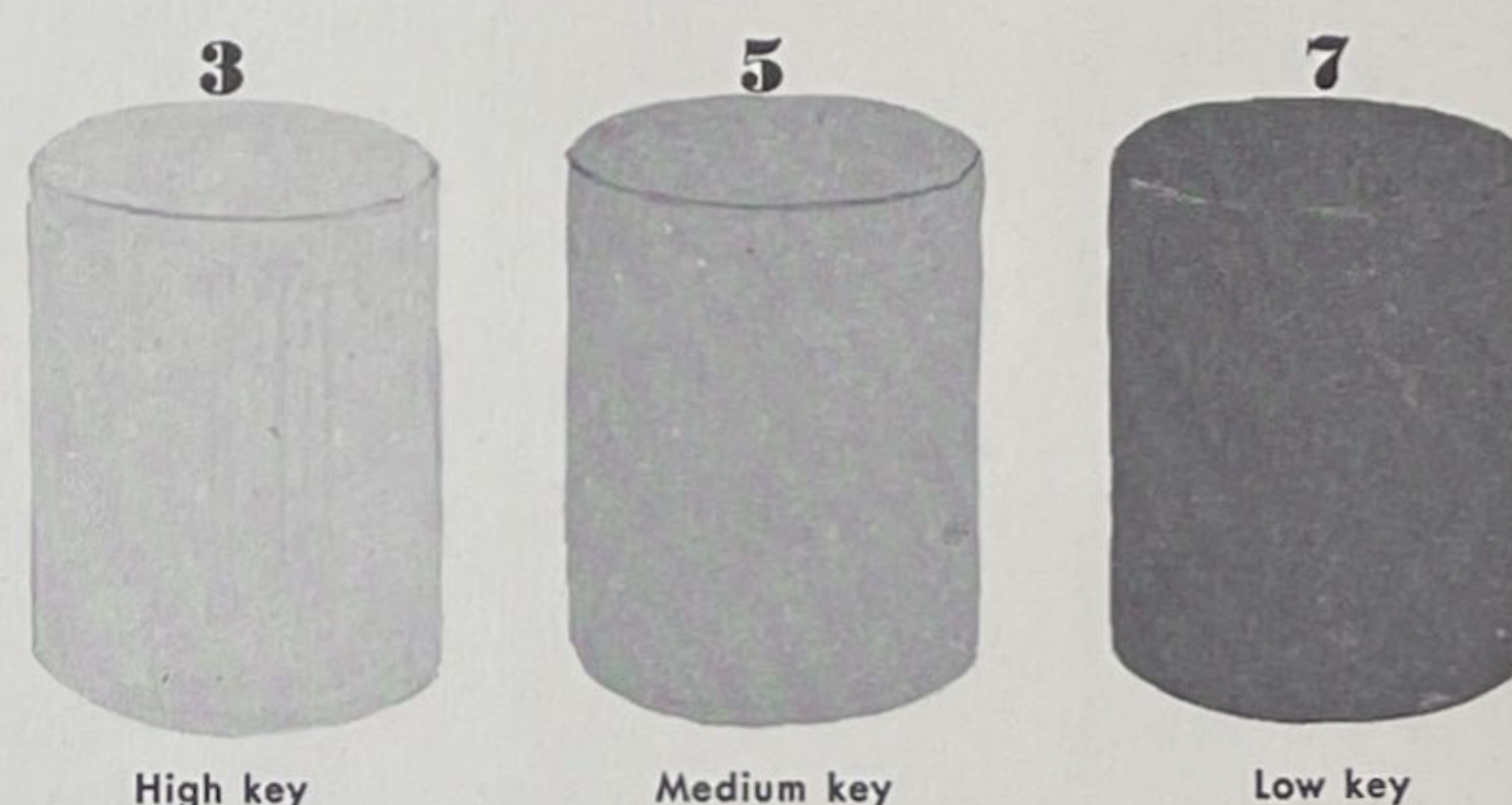1   2   **3**   4   **5**   6   **7**   8   **9**

In the chart above, 1 is pure white while 9 is pure black. Five is an even mixture (or the half-tone) of white and black. Three is an even mixture of 1 and 5; 7 is an even mixture of 5 and 9. Other values are the even mixtures of the two adjoining values. For example, 2 is an even mixture of 1 and 3. In actual studio practice where only small batches of tone are mixed for a job, it is obviously impractical to try to physically measure equal quantities of two tones to get a third one. Consequently, the eye must judge the tone intervals and see that they are uniform from white to black. However, it will help you to judge these intervals visually if you think of these values as equal mixtures. For many problems, especially in composition, it is best to use only five values, namely, 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9.

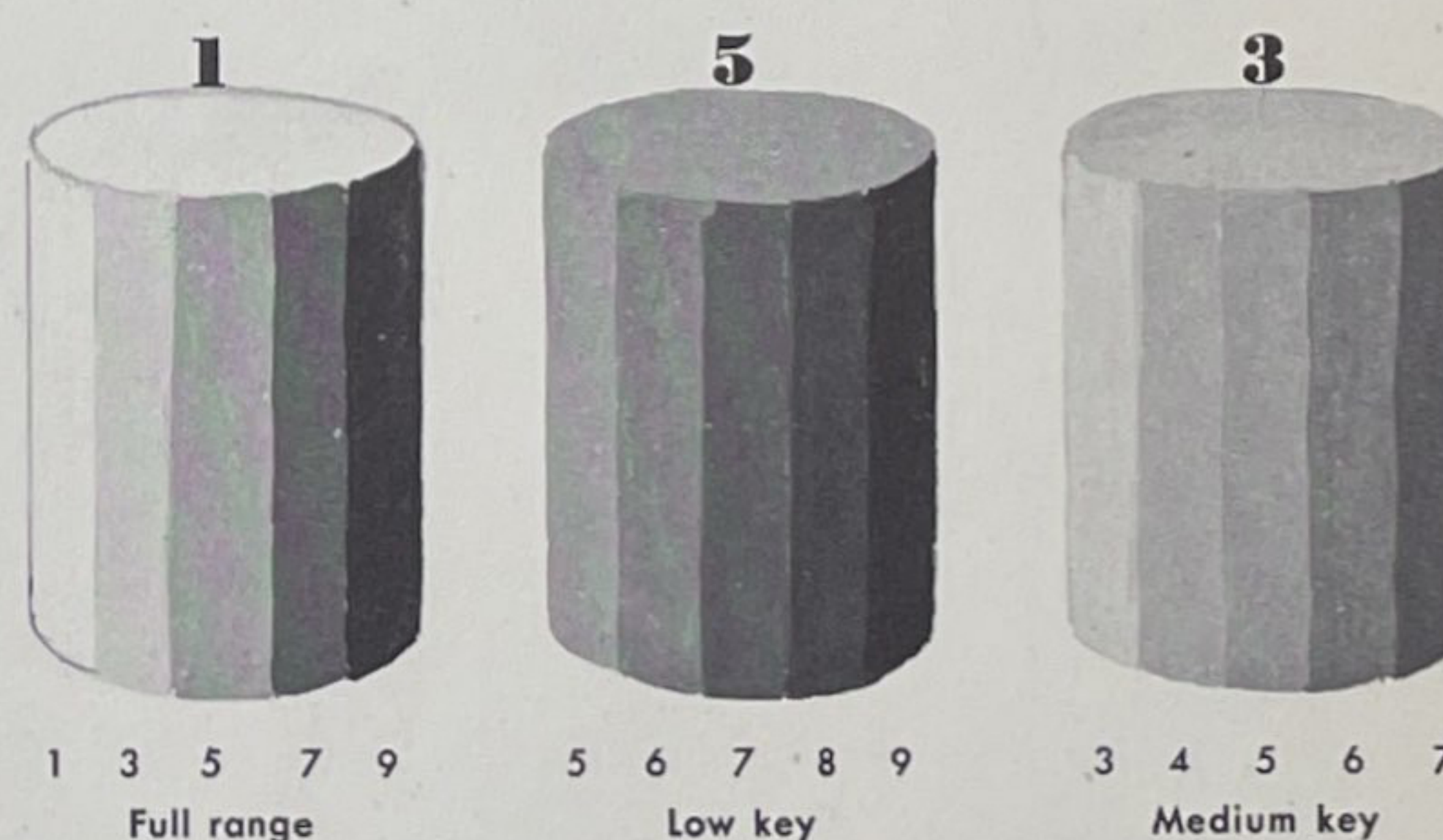## Three basic types of form presentation

Flat tone and outline

In this type of form presentation the outline alone describes the form. The value can be any one that the artist chooses, depending upon the needs of the composition. Usually this type is used where decorative pictures are made. The value used is one that approximates the value of the object in nature or one that is used arbitrarily or dictated by its relation to the final effect desired in a composition. Certain methods of reproduction for printing require this use of flat tone.
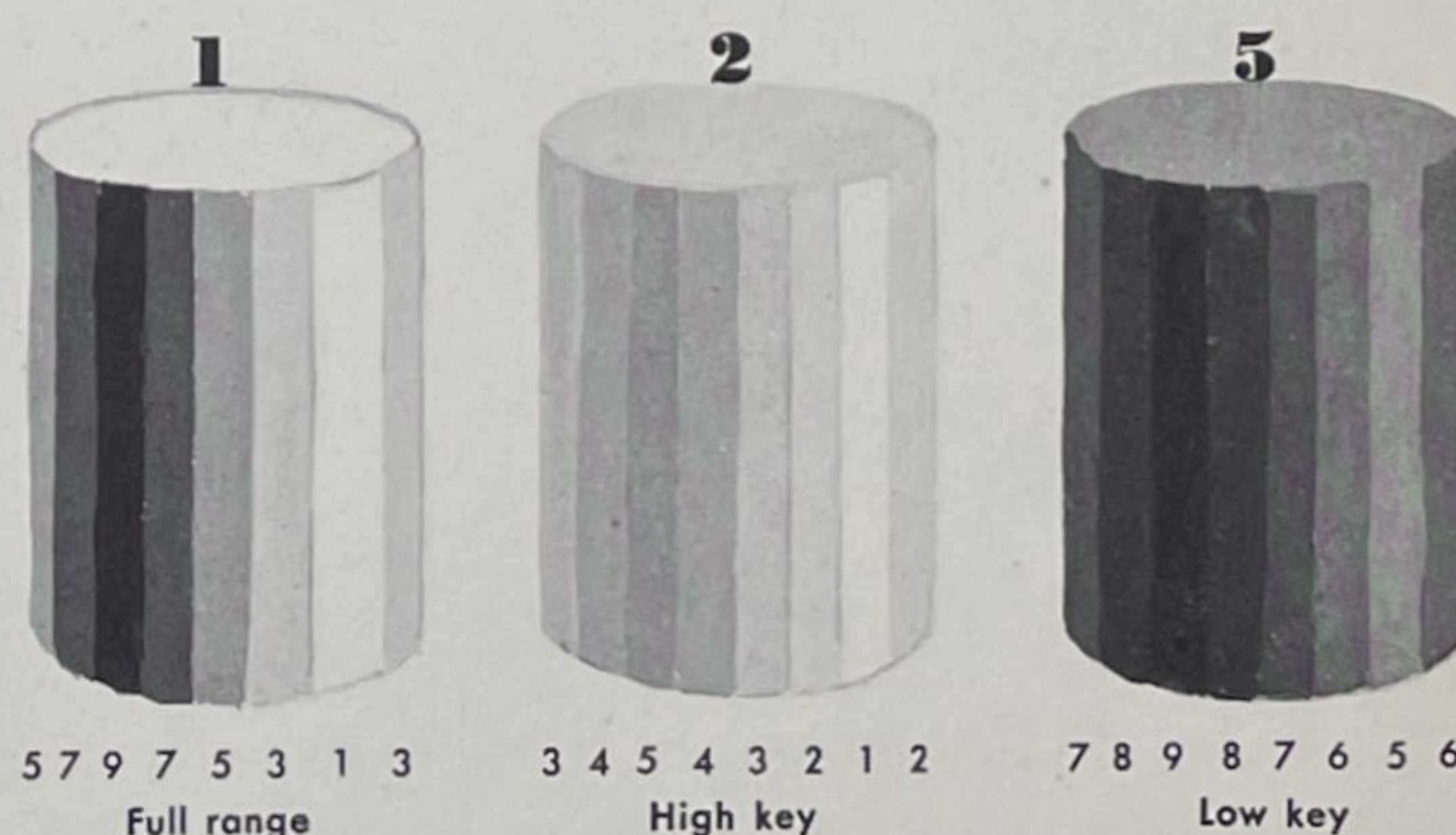

High key   Medium key   Low key

Modeled

Here, the tones sometimes run uniformly from the light to the dark side of the form. The form can be high, low or medium in key and can run through a full or limited range of values. This arbitrary use of tone gives the artist great latitude, as he need not be bound by a positive source of light. There is no fixed method of modeling. Many times an object can be dark on both edges and lighter toward the center. An object next to it could be modeled from light to dark running from left to right, while a third object could be done in the opposite manner.

1 3 5 7 9   5 6 7 8 9   3 4 5 6 7
Full range   Low key   Medium key

Full light and shade

In this type, the light and dark tones are fixed by the shape of the object and the source and strength of the light. This determines the key or intensity of the tone. Often, reflected light from the surrounding surfaces reflects light back into the shadow side. On a cylinder, as in this diagram, it shows as a light edge. This light edge varies with the quantity of light reflected and it should be kept dark enough in value to always appear as part of the shadow side. All forms can be rendered in a full or limited range of values. This is determined entirely by the requirements of the picture.

Note: Generally, only one of these three methods of form presentation should be used in a single composition.
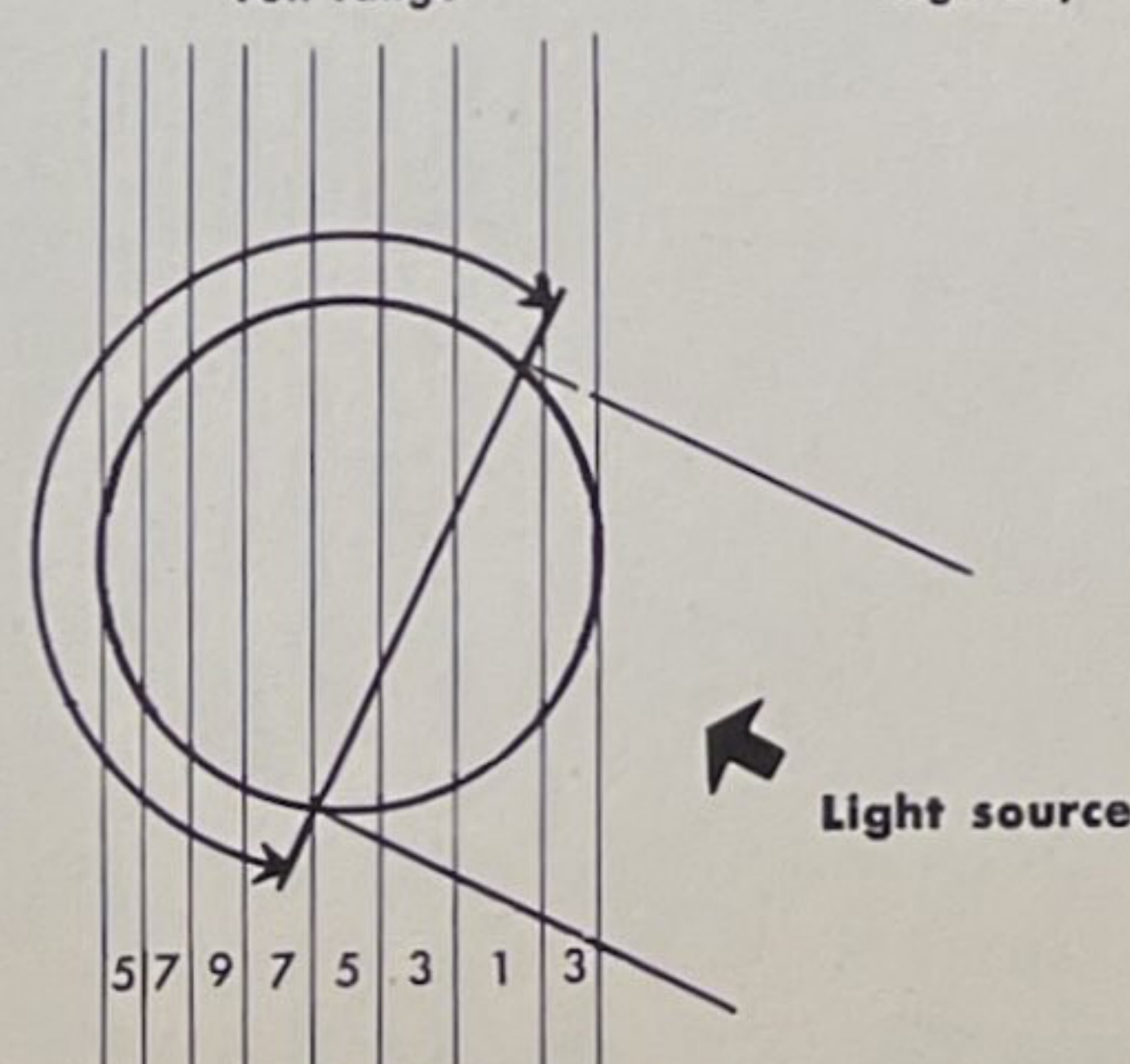

5 7 9 7 5 3 1 3   3 4 5 4 3 2 1 2   7 8 9 8 7 6 5 6
Full range   High key   Low key

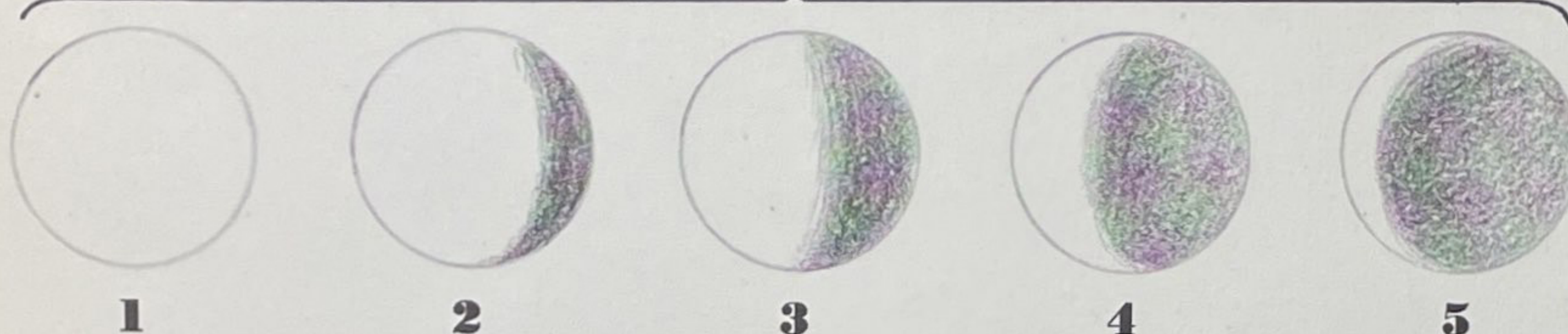Light source

5 7 9 7 5 3 1 3

Interpretation of form

The abstract use of dark and light is synonymous with drawing and composition. To draw you must use dark and light and when you draw you compose. As you use dark and light, you are, at the same time, creating a design and developing a composition. It is true that you may have visualized your picture before using any pencil or paper, but as you actually draw form, a design, a composition and a drawing are being created. We mention this so you will not forget that in good drawing, several considerations must be in your mind simultaneously.

Now let us forget design and composition for a moment and concentrate on drawing — the use of dark and light for interpreting form. As you know, all forms have three dimensions; they have another side. There are three common ways to interpret this solidity of forms with your pencil or brush. They are: flat tone and outline, modeling and light and shade.

1 — *Flat tone and outline.* This method demands good draftsmanship because only a line is used to interpret the edge of a form. You have no shading, no dark edges and no cast shadows to help you gain your effect. You must achieve your interpretation through the direction of lines, the overlapping of forms, the value contrasts and through varying the sizes of the forms. Sometimes the line varies in width to suggest the rounding of a form's edge. In some line drawings, the careful placement of small, dark accents intensifies the feeling of depth. In this method of inter-

Progressing from pure outline to nearly a full back lighting

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Modeling or arbitrary shading

This line drawing has the feeling of full tone which was attained by the skillful use of thick and thin lines. The sharp black accents give emphasis to the character of the subject. The solid black suggests a tone for the lighter parts, the flesh, trousers and hat.

ALBERT DORNE
Courtesy American Magazine

ROBERT FAWCETT

By permission Saturday Evening Post
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This light and shade drawing achieved through the use of line has a full range of tone. When you make a drawing of this type, you must be careful to keep the parts separated to achieve clarity and to keep your solid area quite dark. If you do not, you will have an over-all monotone without definition.

When making a flat tone and outline drawing as simple as this, accent or strengthen the line where it would normally have a shadow. This increases the suggestion of volume. The dark accent on the hair infers a change of texture.
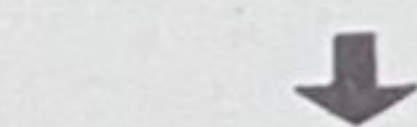
In this flat tone and outline drawing the change of the line's width is ever so slight, but it is enough to give the effect of volume to a shape. The lines are grouped with the form to hold the mass. This grouping gives the total area of the figures a texture. The blacks are used flat and are arbitrarily positioned to give rhythm and balance to the composition.
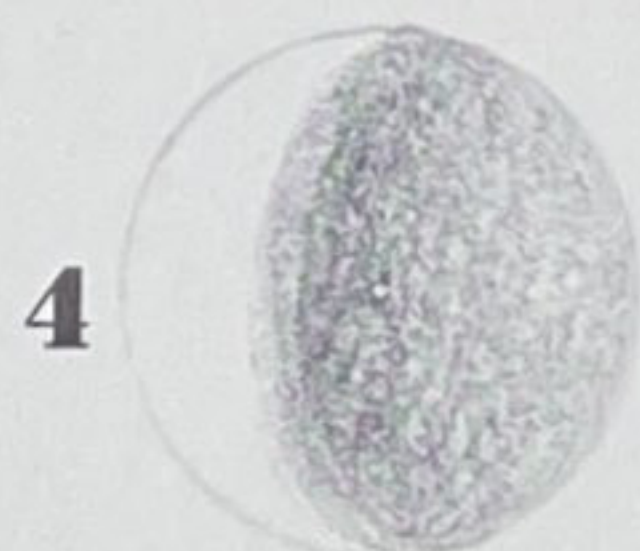
AL PARKER

FRED LUDEKENS

A careful modeling of the shadow area is needed in a back lighted head. The reflected light carries all the definition and must not be allowed to get "cut up" with too much contrast.
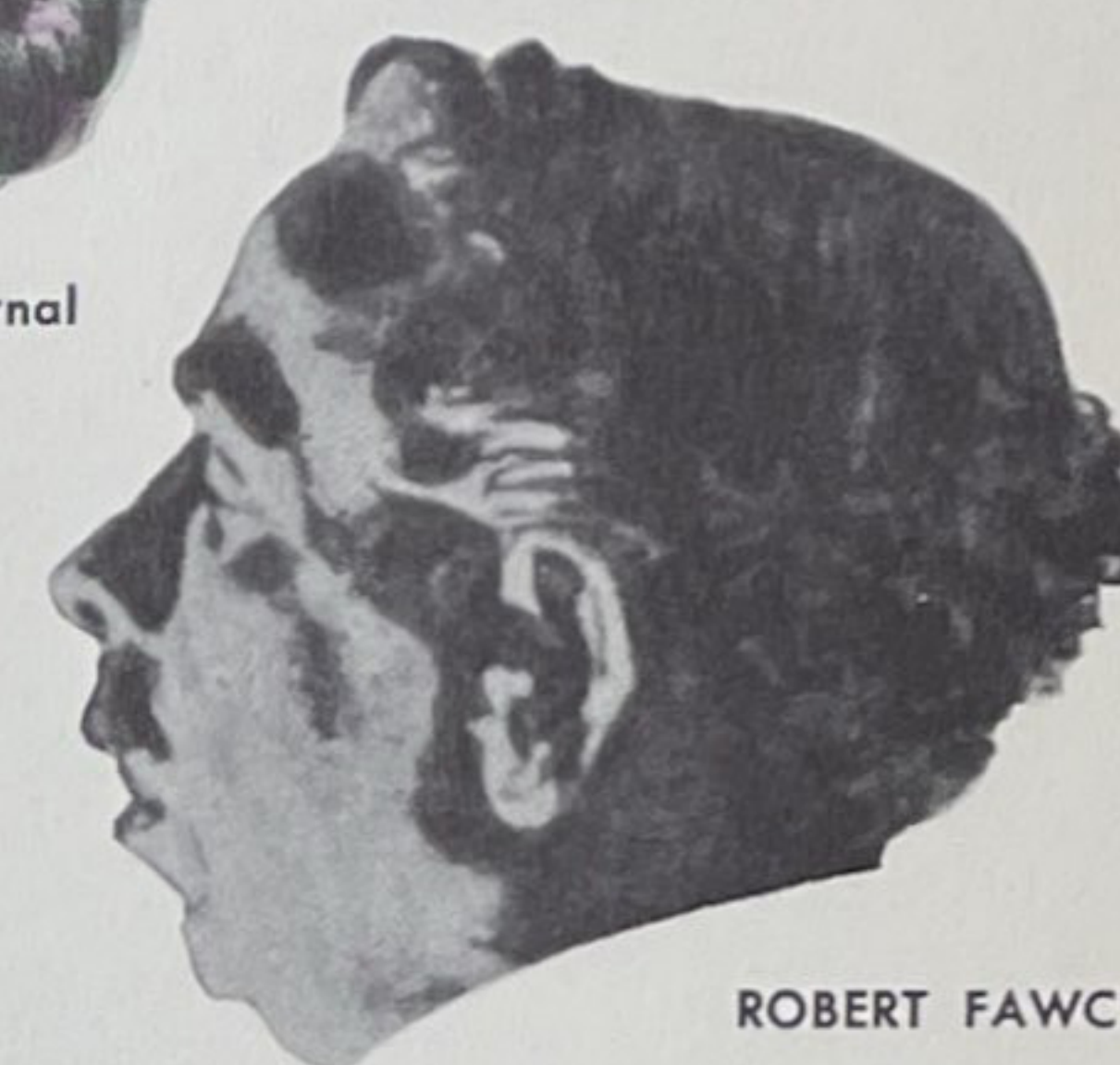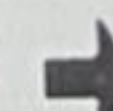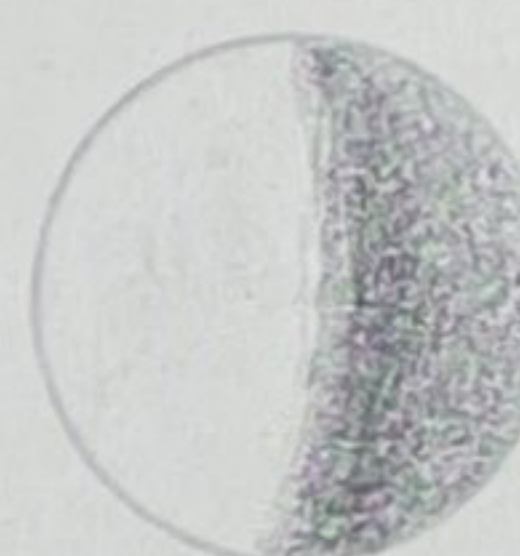
JON WHITCOMB
Courtesy Ladies' Home Journal

ROBERT FAWCETT

The strength of this side light sharpens the contrast and there is very little tone between the two areas. The hair, as a dark mass, helps suggest the tone of the flesh. The shadows on the nose and face designate construction and character.

By permission Saturday Evening Post © 1947 Curtis Pub. Co.

NORMAN ROCKWELL

This head has been drawn with the light source well over to the left front. When drawing a head or form like this, have your tones become progressively darker as they approach the area of shadow.

By permission Saturday Evening Post
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AL PARKER   Courtesy Ladies' Home Journal

In this drawing the light is coming from a position well around toward the back and side. In doing this, keep the mass of the tone fairly even in the shadow. Use a reflected light with care and keep it soft.
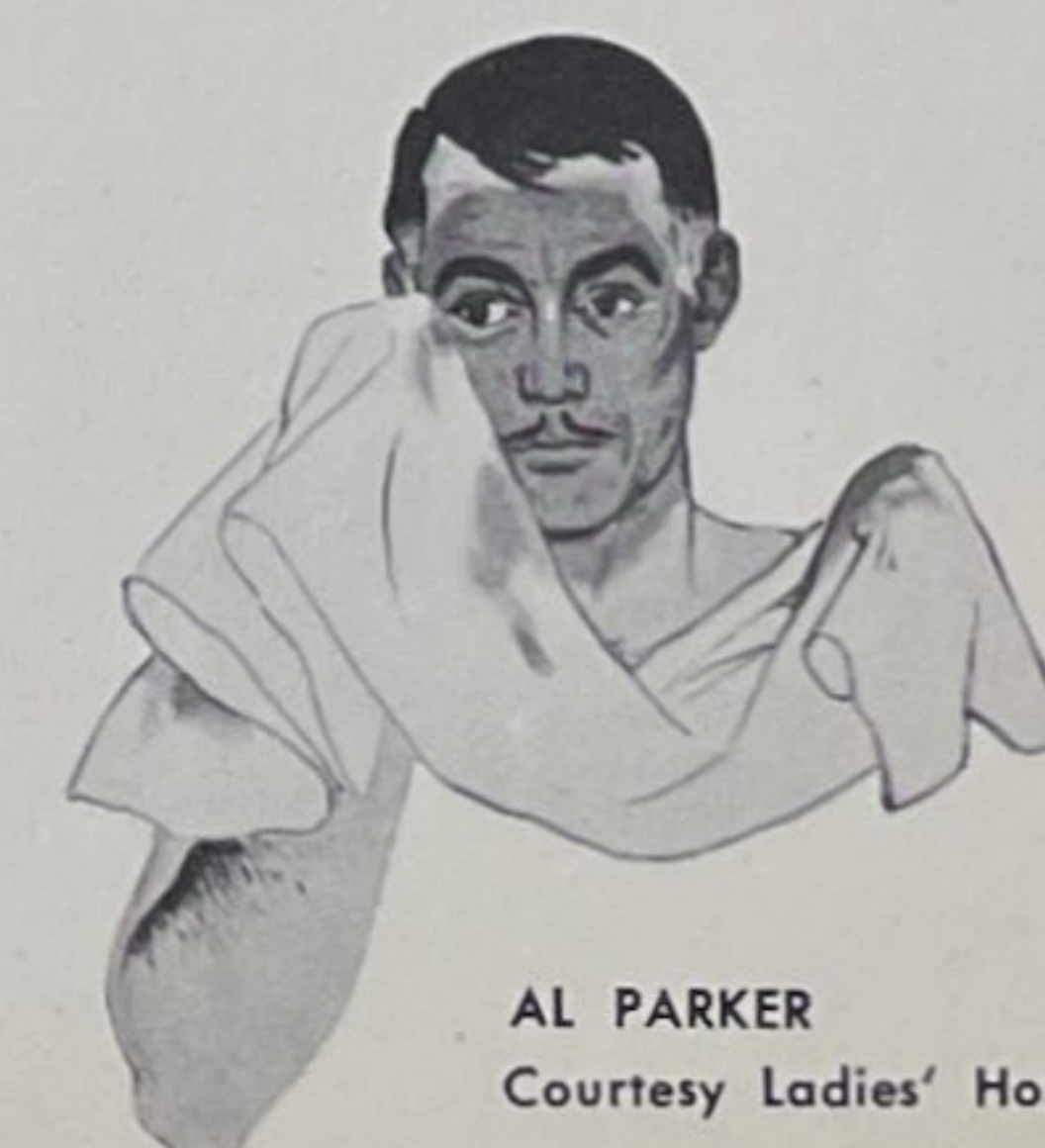
pretation, it is important that the view of an object be selected carefully so that an observer can recognize the form quickly. See page 20 of Lesson 2 for a graphic example of what we mean by carefully selecting the view to draw.

2 — *Modeling*. In this method tone is used. The artist can apply the tone to give volume to the forms with great freedom. Here, the light source is not fixed and each form may be modeled differently to get the desired effect. For example, one form may be light at the top and darkened toward its base while an adjacent form may be light on one side and going toward dark on the other side. Many times the edges of a form are dark and the center is light. The point to this method of interpretation is to give the form a feeling of volume without regard to a set light source.

3 — *Light and shade*. This is the most complex method of interpretation. Here, a direct light source is used and shadows are cast to fortify the effect of solidity in the form. In employing this method, the full range of value is at your command. After sketching in the form, a source of light is established. The form nearest the light has the lightest surface and the darkest shadow side. Forms with sharp edges have sharp contrasts where shadowed planes meet lighted planes. On rounded forms, tone graduates from the most intensely lighted part of the curved surface around to the shadowed edge. This graduation varies according to the contour of the object. The intensity of the lighted areas, the shading and the darks are determined by the strength of the light and the distance the object is from it. The darks and lights also vary according to the *actual tone value of the object*. In addition to these factors, the shadow cast by the object must be considered. The length of this shadow is determined by the height of the object and the angle of the light source. The width of the shadow is governed by the perspective of the surface on which the objects rest. In Lesson 2, we showed the sphere and the cube as they would appear with several different light sources. Here, we have used the simply lighted sphere to explain, graphically, the basic shading of several finished drawings.

We hesitate to recommend any one of the three ways described above for you to use in a picture since the end result of drawing is to have forms appear the way *you* wish them to. The thing to do is to experiment with all three of the methods and, with increasing knowledge, you will be able to select the one that will work best on a particular problem.

JOHN ATHERTON   Courtesy Fortune

In a drawing of this type you model the forms separately but always keep in mind the total design of the picture.

Here is a flat tone and outline drawing. The flat tone suggests flesh and the line suggests the lightness of a towel.
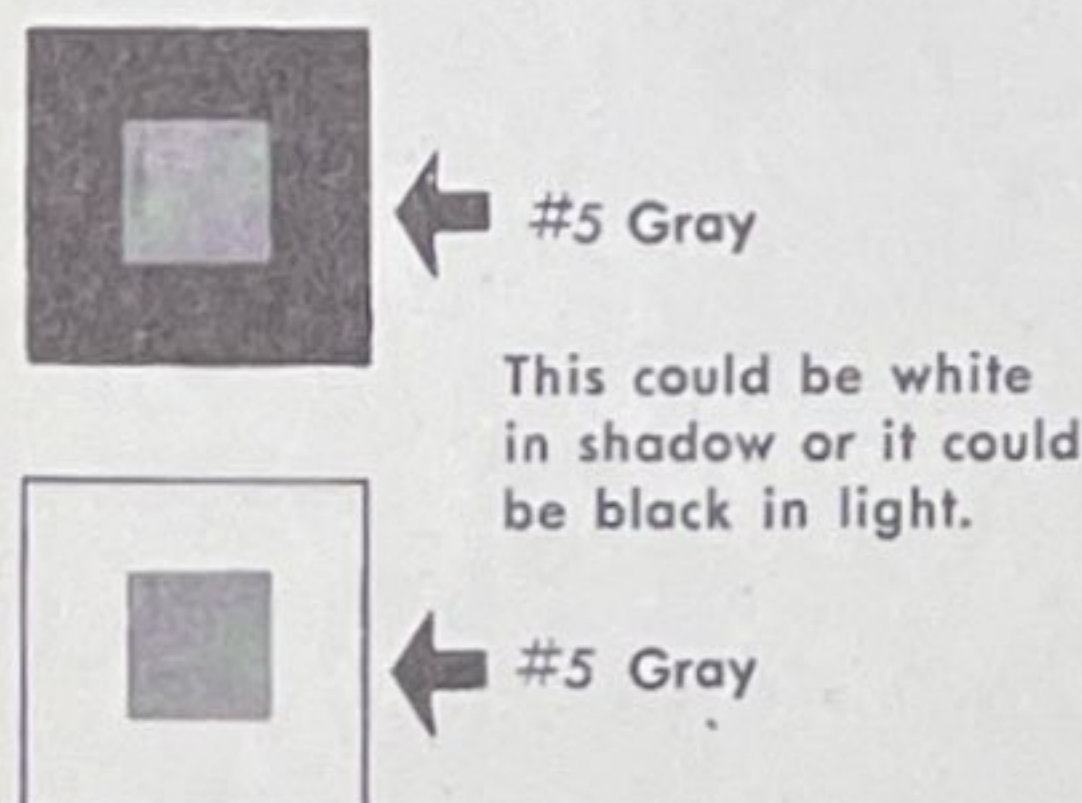
AL PARKER
Courtesy Ladies' Home Journal

Light and shade

Light has a source — and form has another side. As you view an object, you see the light part and the dark part of a form. How much or how little you see of dark or light on the form is determined by three factors. Your position, the light source and the shape of the object. There can be multiple sources of light and various strengths of light. Multiple light sources give multiple shade areas; a strong light makes strong, dark shade.

Art is not a duplication of nature or a facsimile of what the eye sees. The artist uses lights and shades as he wishes to achieve the result he wants. He uses it to make forms convincing. For most practical purposes, a single light source is best. It allows the form or forms to be quickly seen and understood. Multiple light sources are many times used to achieve a high degree of detail or special effects, but multiple light sources can destroy the feeling of form and make a picture confusing. We recommend a single light source. Master it first before attempting the more difficult multiple light source treatment.

The majority of drawings are made with the use of light and shade. It is the most direct way to achieve the illusion of depth, solidity and volume on a flat surface. To do this, you must first understand the construction of the form you are to draw. Next you must determine the source of light. Your paper is light so proceed first to place the position of the shade. This can be done in any dark tone. How dark in the value scale it should be, is determined by the *strength of the light* and the *local value of the object it strikes.* For most commercial use a strong contrast of light and shade is desirable for purposes of reproduction. Do not be afraid to make the darks strong. If you don't, you will have a thin, weak drawing in monotone.

←#5 Gray

This could be white in shadow or it could be black in light.

←#5 Gray

The girl's head and the top of her shoulders are deepened in tone as they come in contact with the strong light of the window. The value of the hands is only slightly lighter. Notice the reflected glow on the back of the hands and the strong light on the edges.

The right side of the upper body comes in direct contact with and separates clearly from the dark jacket of the man behind. The middle of the girl's back has a decided glow of reflected light cast from some surface within the room.

The volume, shape and roundness of the hoop skirt are full of reflected light in very close values. Several accents in the folds of the skirt give depth to the whole figure.

The tone area of the floor is only slightly different in value from the dress. The darker right edge of the dress picks up a strong light edge at the bottom from the light from the door which clearly separates the value of the skirt from that of the floor. In contrast, the floor has directional lines suggesting the planks.

The head of this central character has two, narrow, strong lights on each side. They are pure white but small so they do not destroy the contour and mass of the dark head. The white kerchief at the man's neck is quite dark in tone but holds its position as it is in perfect value. The same can be said of the man's shirt.

There are several areas here of solid black and many small, but very pure, white high lights. The shadow on the left side of the hat in the man's hand determines the source of the reflected light which comes from the upper right-hand side of the room.

The trouser leg — in fact, all of the man outside — is painted in a different key, as the source of light in his position is different from the rest of the group. He is back lighted but is lighted in an over-all tone which shows a strong reflected light from the sun striking the background near the door.
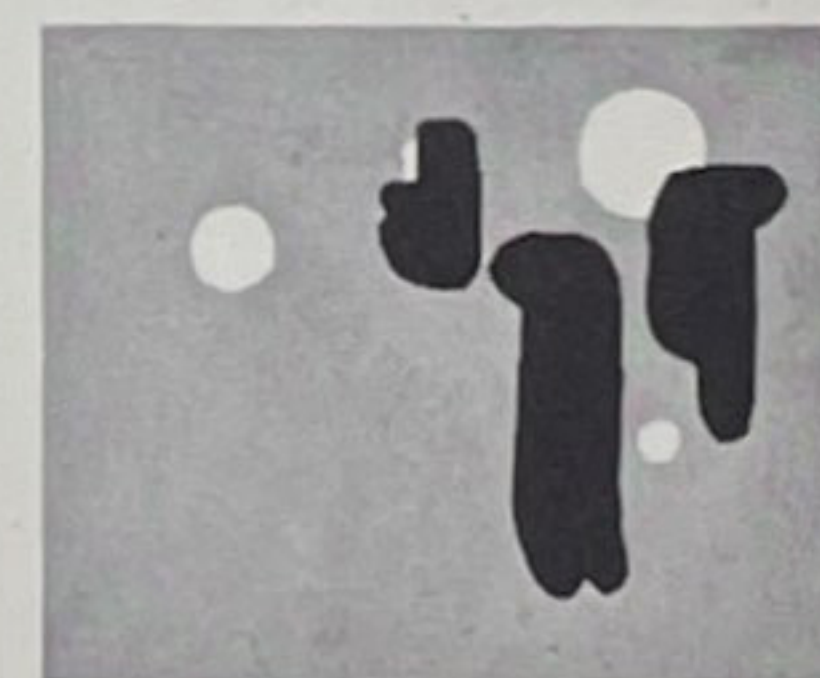
HAROLD VON SCHMIDT   By permission Saturday Evening Post © 1942 Curtis Pub. Co.

This is an excellent example of painting in the full range of tone. The over-all tone is dominated by a middle value of gray to give atmosphere and volume. The darks and lights are used in small areas. Within this mass of gray, innumerable accents and gradings of tones are used to give solidity and volume to the forms. This illustration is full of reflected light cast back into the figure from a place in the foreground.

This is the abstract tone key of the Von Schmidt painting showing the approximate area of dark, light and middle tone distribution.

A study in changing light and shade

Front　　　　　　　　　　　**Front left**　　　　　　　　　　**Back left**

In these sketches, we try to show you in a simple manner what happens to the areas of value as the light is moved around a form. Notice how the areas of black change in size and position. The light shift also changes the areas and position of the middle tones on the form.

Back　　　　　　　　　　　　**Back right**　　　　　　　　　　**Front right**

The key of the picture is slightly different in each example. The optical effect is also different. Side light quickly gives the form of the figures solidity and soundness. The back light gives a mysterious and dramatic quality to the figure. A shift of light changes many things.

Study nature constantly. Notice how sharp accents are and the depth of shadow values. The accents and shadow values give delineation to the form. We emphasize this because students are usually timid, and their drawings appear weak and lack the full quality of tone that gives richness. A pure white and a pure black in a picture measure the depth of all the other values of tone.

In the diagrams here, we show what happens in the same drawing when the light source is placed in different positions. For purposes of clarity we have used only five values. Each of these values could have great variety *within each area* to give finish and character to the form. Notice the full body of tone quality in all of the above sketches. It is present because pure white and black are used which give all of the tones their proper position in the value scale.

It is also evident in these pictures that an *optical change occurs when we change the areas of values.* This means that when we change the area relationship, a different emotional effect is produced in the observer. Although the purpose of these six sketches is to show what happens when the light source changes, they also serve as a reminder that a seemingly slight change in tone area can greatly affect the feeling of the total picture. This is why we have constantly told you *not to destroy the areas and values you have in a good small sketch* when you begin to finish it. A common fault is to get "busy" somewhere in a picture and destroy a tone area and its relation to all of the other areas. Don't forget this, otherwise you will work awfully hard only to discover that you have wasted your time. Or else you will have to change all the other parts and finish with an entirely different picture.

Front left with cast shadow

We have placed a wall close on the left-hand side of the figure. The addition of the shadow cast on the wall does two things. It puts a boundary on the space, enclosing the area; and it increases the area of dark, changing the tone key.
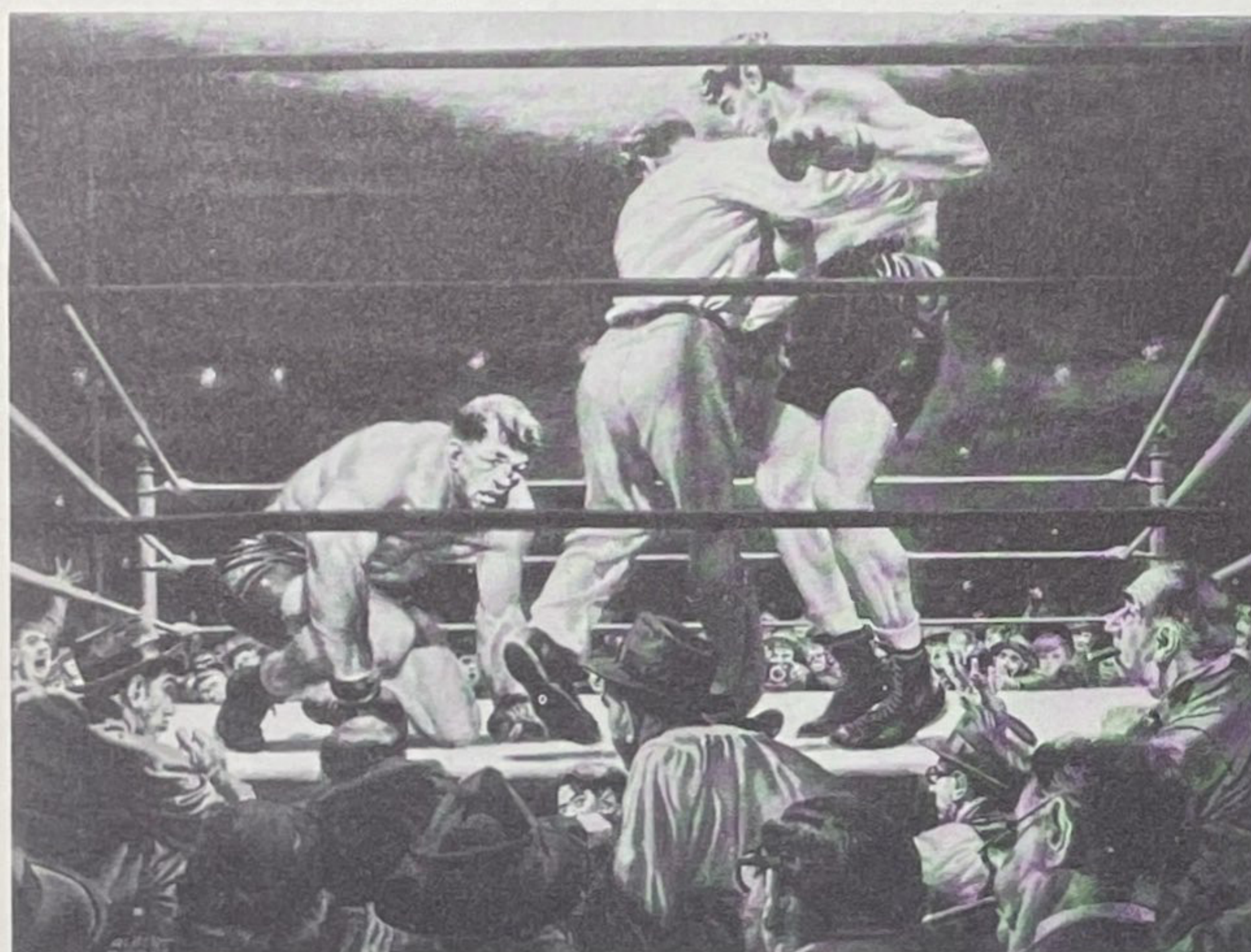
Sunlight   FRED LUDEKENS

In this picture there is a feeling of early morning or late afternoon sunlight.

Courtesy
Cosmopolitan Magazine

Spotlight   JON WHITCOMB

An unusual use of concentrated light to focus emphasis on one part of the head.
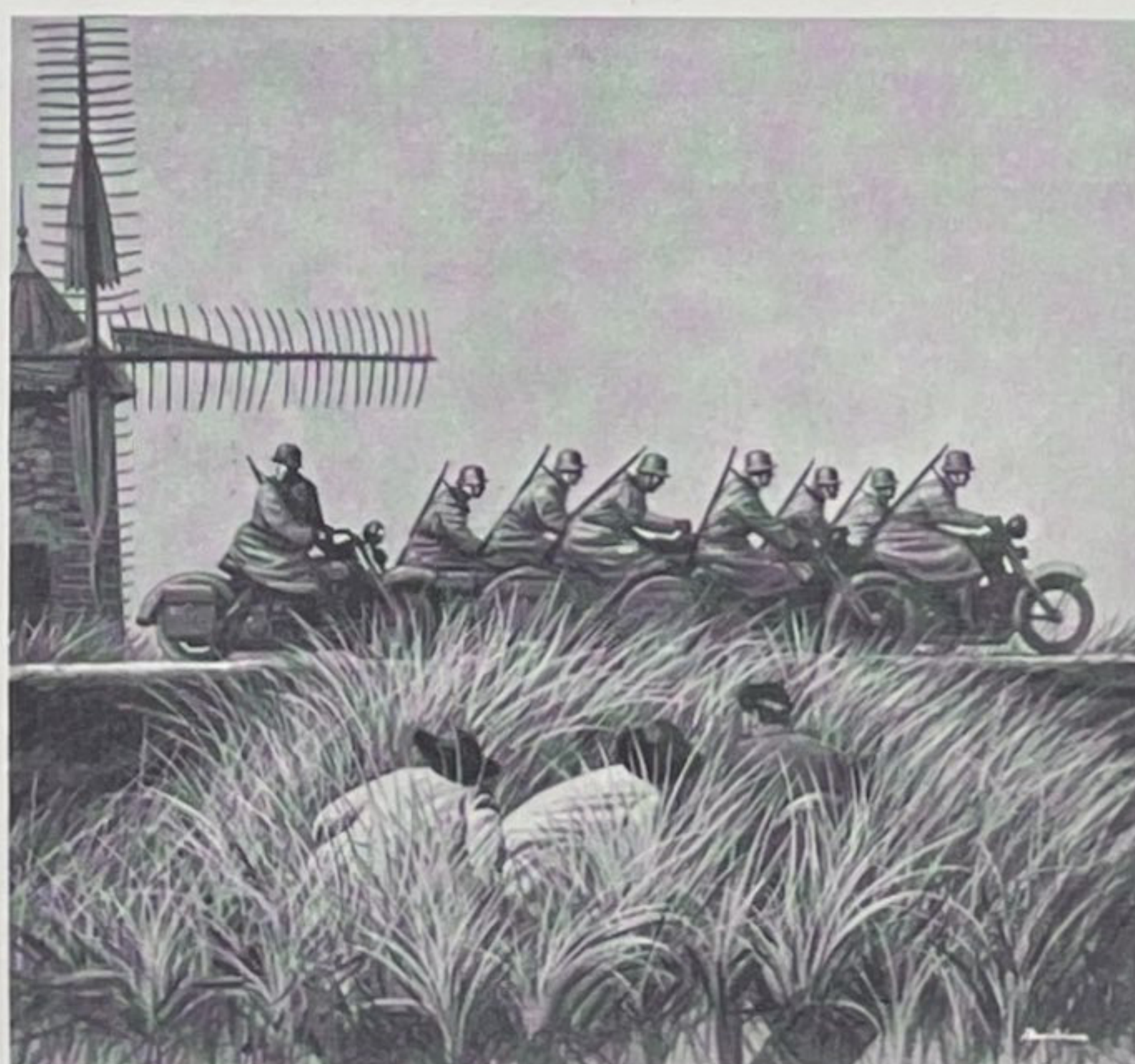

Toplight   ALBERT DORNE

The light is directly over the figures in the ring in this picture.

Sidelight   ROBERT FAWCETT

In this one the side light gives the figures solidity and volume.

Moonlight   STEVAN DOHANOS

Here is the dramatic feeling of moonlight from behind and to the left.

By permission Saturday Evening Post © 1942, 1948, 1949 Curtis Pub. Co.

Courtesy Ladies' Home Journal

Decorative   AL PARKER

Here is line and tone and silhouette with no concern as to lighting.

Modeled NORMAN ROCKWELL

Note the lack of contrast between light and shadow planes and the subtle modeling. The light and dark are created by the local color of each object.

Indirect AUSTIN BRIGGS

There is no direct light or contrasting shadow in this picture but an indirect, over-all glow of light.

Backlight HAROLD VON SCHMIDT

The light from the back accents the figures here. Notice the reflected light cast back into the forms.

Sidelight BEN STAHL

Here the light is from above and to the right. The underplanes and the right side of the picture are in shadow.

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Pictures and light

All of the pictures on these two pages were done by members of the faculty for some assignment. The use of light and dark is as varied as the pictures. Each assignment either suggested the way, or the artist selected the way, to use the light and the dark. Under each picture is a short explanation about the use of light.

This is a lesson on dark and light and we are exploring the different parts of the subject that are most often effective in commercial use. We believe that an artist is essentially a creative individual and that many times an explanation of a picture done by someone else to achieve a certain objective will stimulate the student in a creative way. This results in thinking and accomplishment on the part of the student. It stimulates him and often results in his doing a new and original creation by opening an avenue of thought. There is *no one way* to do a picture. Pictures must be original, they must be *your pictures*. Notice how definitely the pictures on these pages "belong to the artists that painted them." Study the use of dark and light and tone as these men have used them.

See the pictures in their total force and then explore the interpretation and rendering of detail. You will notice the most complicated of these paintings are essentially simple in their structure. Some of the artists have relied on tone. Others have relied on design, rhythm or texture as the basis of construction. *None of them* has, for a moment, lost sight of the idea and the final result. Every artist leans in a direction. He favors design, values, composition, detail, character, motion, humor or something. We say he *favors these* — that does not mean that he discards all of the other factors — it only means that each artist usually works in a certain characteristic manner.

Strong

Medium

Weak

Remember these intensities of light when drawing.

Light source

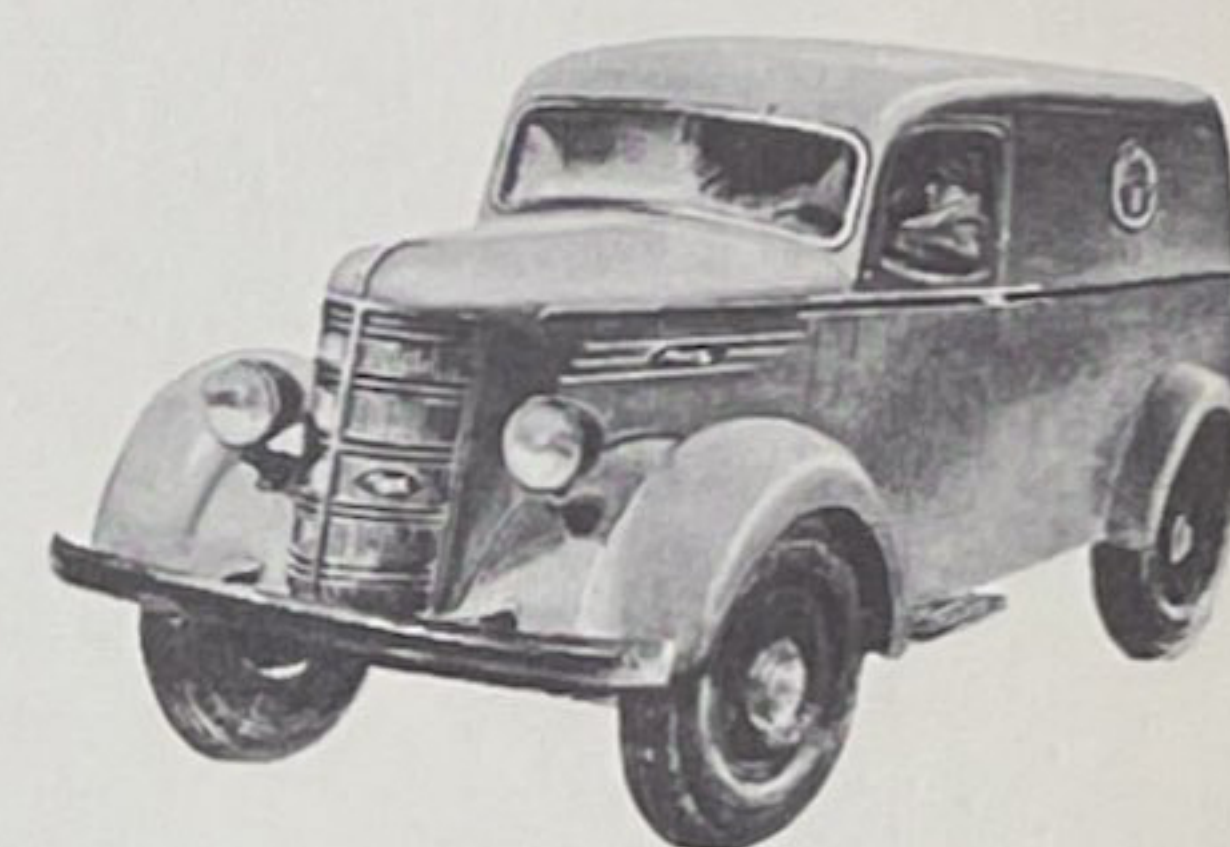The high light on this sphere is at a point on the surface that is nearest the light source.

The main surfaces of a head pick up the high lights. They are the forehead, nose, eyes, cheeks, lips and the hair. The large forehead high light is in the same position as the high light of the sphere above.

Light source

Many times there are several high lights along horizontal or vertical edges.

Many small lights are usually found in a polished surface. They are small high lights and reflected lights from surrounding objects.

Light source

A sphere picks up a glowing light reflected from the surface near it. A glossy surface reflects a brighter light.

A reflected light on a head need not come from a surface as we show on the sphere above. The action is the same, nevertheless.

Light source

There are many surfaces that reflect light to other surfaces. They can be in many places.
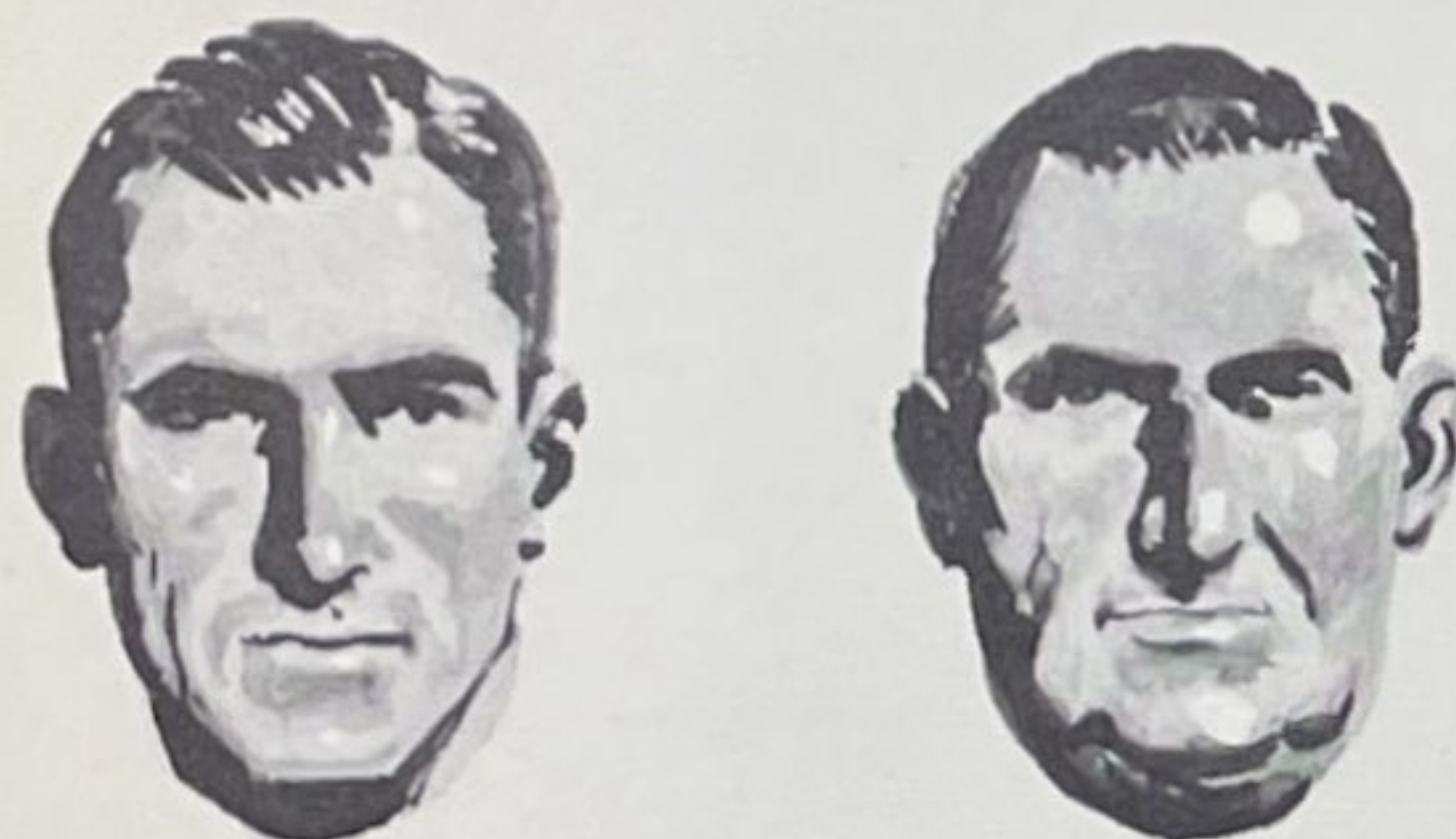
A reflected light in the sides of a car is usually reflected from the ground or pavement.

High lights and reflected light

On the surface of a simple form, the point nearest the light source has a high light. The smoother the surface, the brighter the high light. When you have a compound form — that is, a form composed of different curves and surfaces, such as a head or an automobile — each separate surface will have a high light of its own. On a head such surfaces would be the eyes, the nose, the lips, the cheek and the forehead. On an automobile, they would be the hood, the corner of the top, the curve of the fender, etc. On the head, the high lights vary in intensity according to the slickness of the surface. The eye and forehead and nose have the strongest high lights while on an automobile, which has an equally slick surface all over, the high lights are more or less of the same intensity. The best way to determine the position of the high lights is to first determine the source of light and the high light will be at the point on the form nearest the light.

High lights should not be too large in area. If they are too large, they destroy the form rather than high light it. In other words, in such a case, the mass is broken and the high light becomes an area rather than a high light. The intensity of the high light interprets the character of a form's surface. A strong one means a polished or slick surface; a dull one indicates a mat surface. This is an aid in having the spectator get the proper interpretation of the object. Think of this when you are giving the final high lights to an edge or surface.

Above, we show you how the high light destroys the form because it is too large.

Notice how the reflected light is no longer a reflected light, but has become the direct light because it is very intense.

Small sharp high lights. Glowing reflected light.

JON WHITCOMB   Courtesy McCalls

Reflected light is light that is "bounced" from an adjacent, lighted surface into the shadow. The more polished the surface from which the reflection is cast, the stronger is the reflected light. A reflected light appears to have a "glow." It is soft. Properly used it increases the delineation of form and the illusion of volume. It becomes somewhat atmospheric. The student should use reflected light with restriction. It can as quickly destroy the drawing of a form as it can intensify the interpretation. Destruction of the form is usually caused by having the reflected light too strong and harsh and it becomes *OUT OF VALUE.* Think of this and use reflected light as a soft glow and you will stay out of trouble. Use it as little as possible until you have some experience and you will stay out of more trouble.

It is difficult for us to say what should or should not have a reflected light. It depends on the drawing, the subject and the objective. You must decide this. We only warn you — don't overdo it. Otherwise you will have a badly "cut up" picture with no pictorial unity. Detail and delineation can be worked on at the sacrifice of the total picture. Try to avoid this. With experience and skill you will have plenty of time to go into it further.
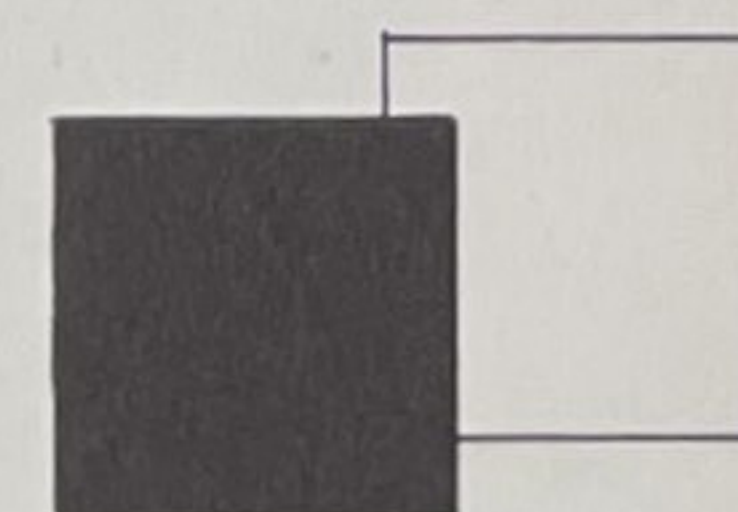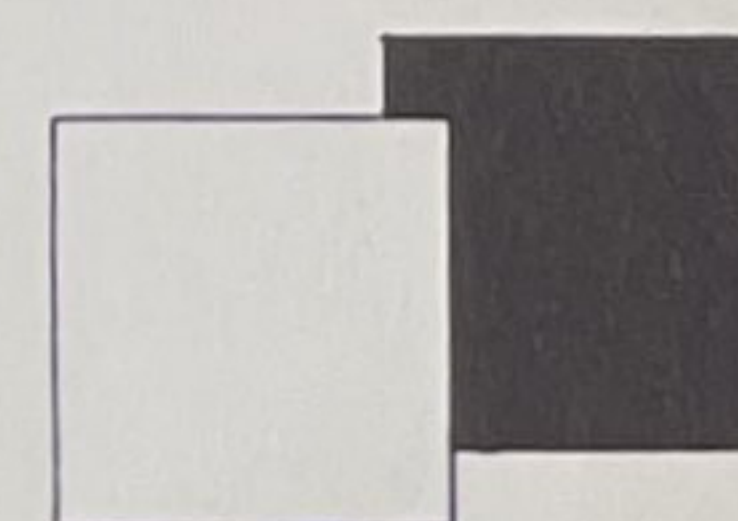
Depth

We believe that the basis of good pictures is good drawing. It is often said that good drawing cannot be destroyed by poor color or tone, but that good color or tone *cannot make a poor drawing good.* Think that over. If you have a picture well composed — the forms properly overlapping, the relation of sizes correct, and the perspective accurate — you can place the tones almost anywhere you wish. The tones can be spotty; the picture can be dark, middle value or light. This is determined by the effect you wish the picture to have. Now let us repeat, *you cannot do this without good drawing.*
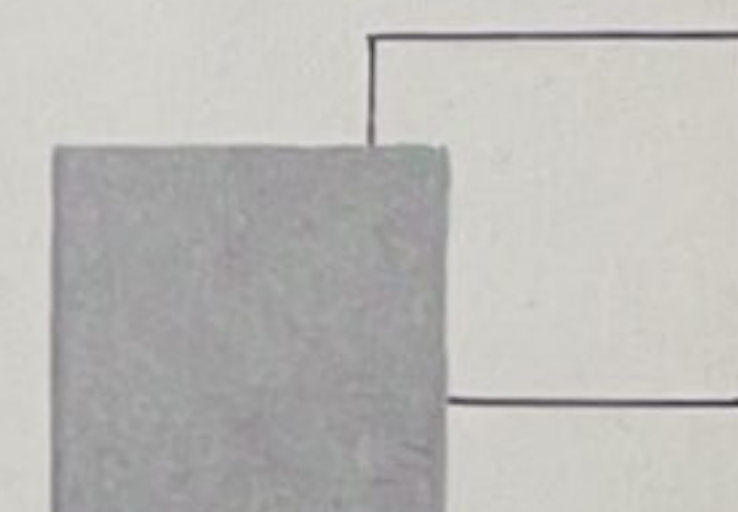
With a well drawn composition you can have the background dark and the foreground light, or the reverse of this. To strengthen direction you can increase the strength of the oblique lines of perspective to a point where there is no question as to what you wish the eye to do. You can increase or decrease the tones in direction to create mood, rhythm, or emphasis. Tones, as they recede from the eye, *do not have to become lighter* to give the effect of distance. *If your drawing is good* you can place the values where you wish. We do not mean that if you have a dark building in a landscape you should paint it light gray. We mean that if it is light gray, *good drawing will keep it in position,* regardless of its tone value. You must use judgement in the position of your tone areas as they relate to the forms (and their tone and color) that you are interpreting.

Artists are individuals and each artist has a slightly different approach to problems of this sort. We recommend that you do it your way with regard to the fundamentals we give you. Be sure to get richness of tone — don't produce thin, anemic pictures. In depth, the forms should be rich in their interpretation. Don't be afraid of a pure white or a solid black. Don't forget, black and white measure the values between them. For example, the over-all tone of an apple may be about a half-tone but a few black accents, a very dark edge on one side and a white high light will give it richness of tone.

In placing tones in depth, endeavor to keep each of the different forms in an over-all tone that best interprets the character and color of that particular form. In normal light, interpret the *normal* tone of a dark coat, a white shirt, a gray beach, a dark sea, a middle tone sky, white clouds, and so on. When modeling these forms *do not let the detail destroy their over-all tone.*

If the drawing is good and the objects overlap, you can place the values where you wish.

Identical compositions can be keyed many ways. Here we show you the dark in the foreground and the dark in the background. We have shifted the gray at will. The keying is variable because the position of the object is good and the drawing is sound. Notice that the area distribution between the values is unequal in each case.

FRED LUDEKENS

It is difficult to destroy the illusion of depth with tone, if the drawing is right. Depth and perspective were once thought to be gotten only through the recession and lightening of tone into depth. This theory has been exploded, and, with accurate perspective and the overlapping of objects, today's artist can use tone arbitrarily in composition and design.

Courtesy American Magazine

Dominance — interval of values — tone key

In addition to unity, a composition must possess a dominant element. Whatever it is: a line, a value or a direction, _one must dominate_. Also, in your use of values _one must dominate the others_. Aside from the dominance of value, dominance can also be achieved through size, intensity or contrast. Contrast is essential to a composition since, as you know, a picture must have variety. An arrangement of forms or values equal in emphasis and similar in shape will create only monotony. To avoid this we vary sizes, values, textures and direction. And when we want emphasis we get it by creating contrasts. For example, a whistle is emphatic because it contrasts violently with the preceding quiet; and we find white emphatic when it is compared with black. _Such emphasis is gained through contrast._

When using values, never use equal amounts of tones, or tones with an equal interval of value. If you do, you will be unable to create any variety or contrast — you will get no dominance. If, for example, you are using black, white and gray, use a gray that is No. 4 or 6 in the value scale. _Don't use No. 5._ In other words, choose an _unequal interval of value._ Then be certain that one of your tones, either the black, white or gray, is dominant in the composition.

The over-all key of a composition is governed by the relative amounts of the picture area that are covered by dark, middle and light values.   A predominately dark picture is said to be low in key and a picture in which light tones fill the largest area is said to be high in key. The key of your picture is important since it does a great deal to set the mood of a picture. There are universal reactions to different amounts of light and light affects people psychologically. For this reason, the key of a painting is important as it induces a calculable emotional reaction in an observer. In selecting tones to use, this reaction must have primary consideration. We have told you constantly _not to destroy_ an area of tone in a composition that was determined in the original sketch. If you destroy such a tone area, you _destroy the key._ It is permissible, however, to have many minor and major contrasts within a tone area and still maintain the key of the picture. But when the tonal composition and its planned effect are forgotten, the supplementary elements take over and change the finished picture. When these elements take over the result is often an unsatisfactory equalization of areas and tones with the consequent loss of any dominance.
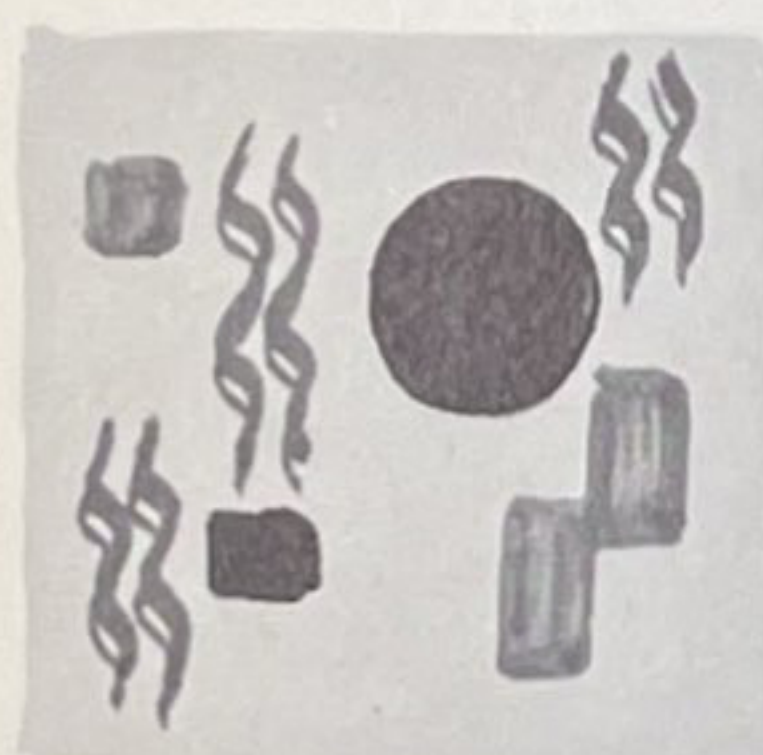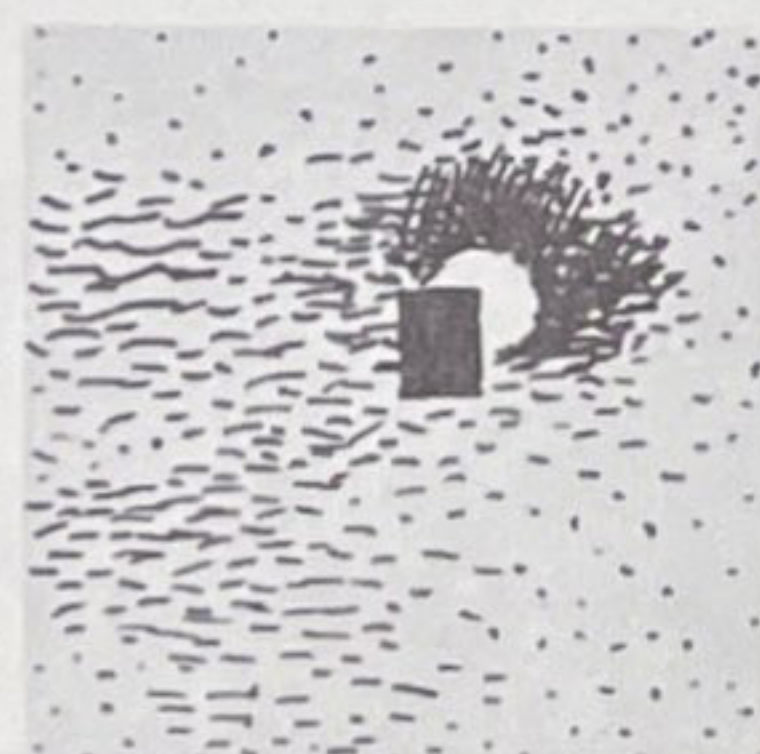
To demonstrate, we show you here several flat value compositions and diagrams. They have nothing to do with a subject or an idea. The subject is successfully painted _within_ the tone structure regardless of whether it is a realistic painting or a flat, two-dimensional design.

On these pages we have discussed only a part of picture making but you must remember that all the parts of a finished picture are inseparable. All things: form, anatomy, motion, rhythm, emphasis, design, composition, tones, values and subject matter must form a cohesive whole. They must all be combined to make one thing — a picture. What we have said here is, therefore, related to all of the things you have been taught before and to all of the things that are to come.

Remember these two things: 1. _Divide the space unequally_ within the picture area and be sure the quantity of one value used is large enough to dominate the other values.

2. _Select values at unequal intervals_ on the value scale so they excite interest, avoid monotony and maintain unity.
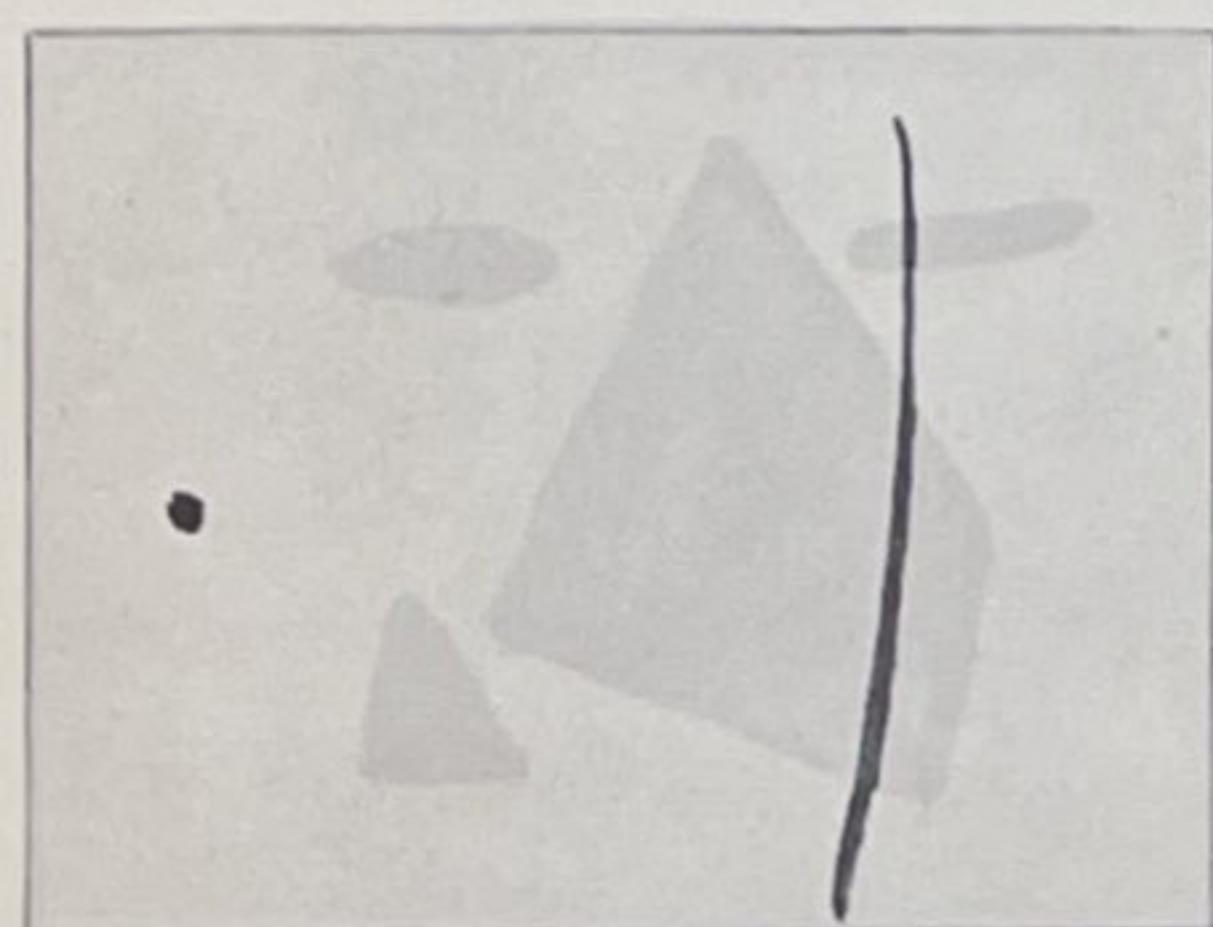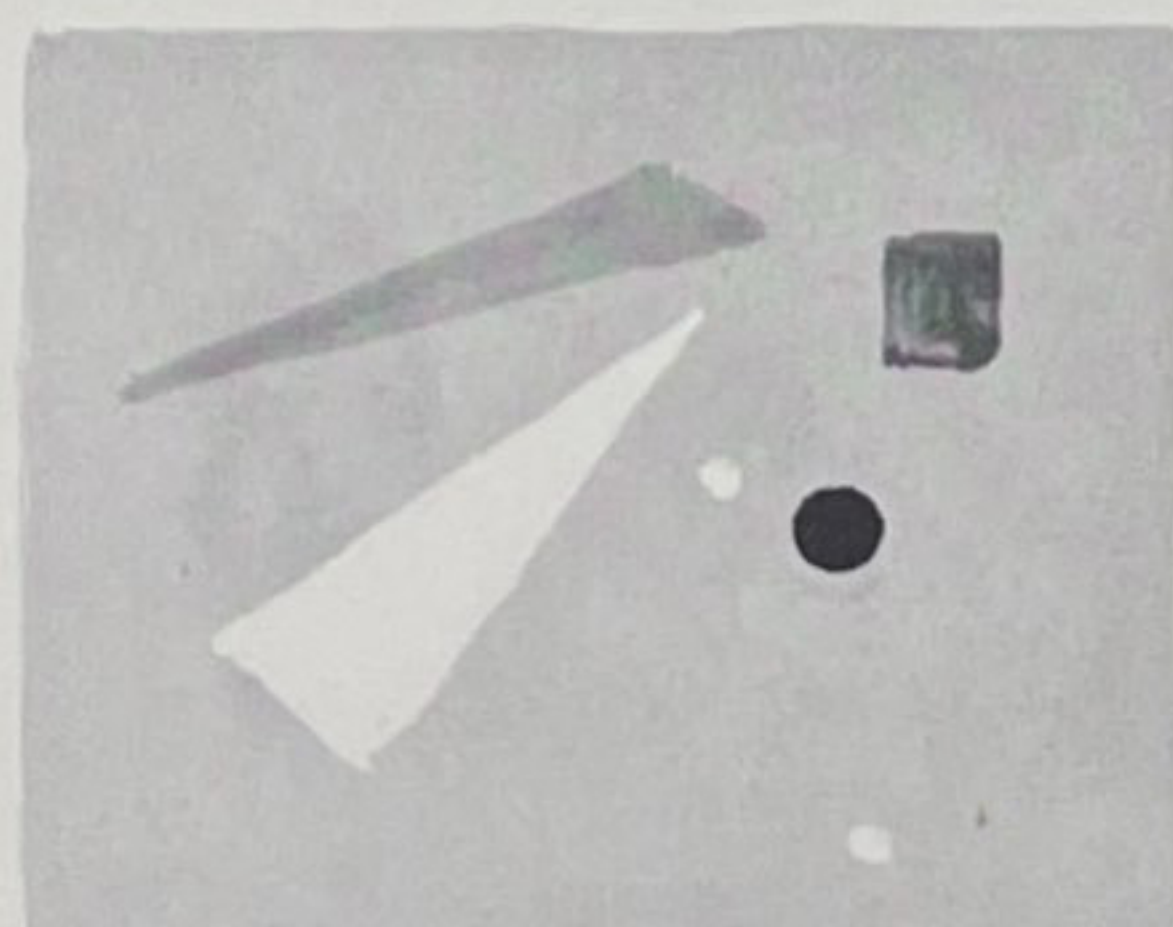
Light key

Middle key

Dark key

The over-all key of a composition is governed by relative amounts of the picture area that are covered by dark, middle and light values.

The same principle applies in line drawings where textures interpret the values.
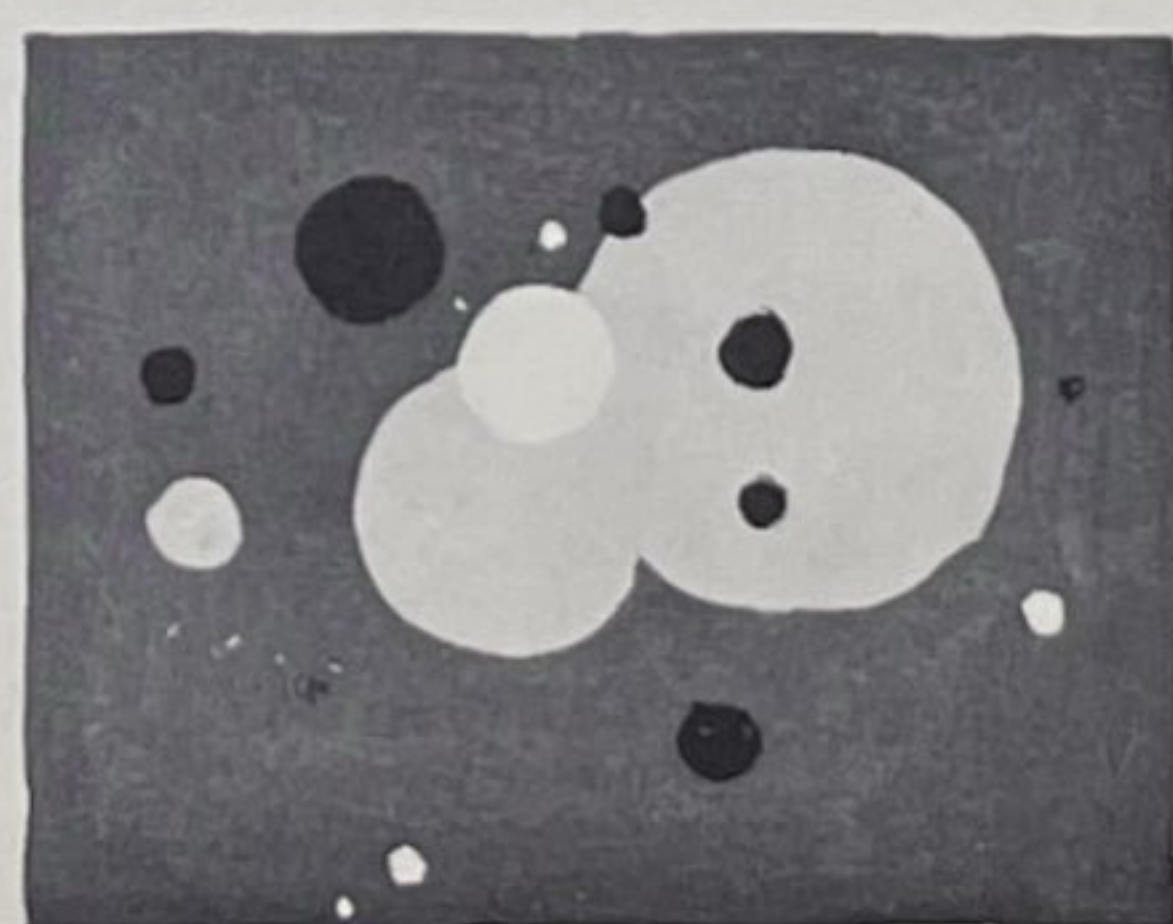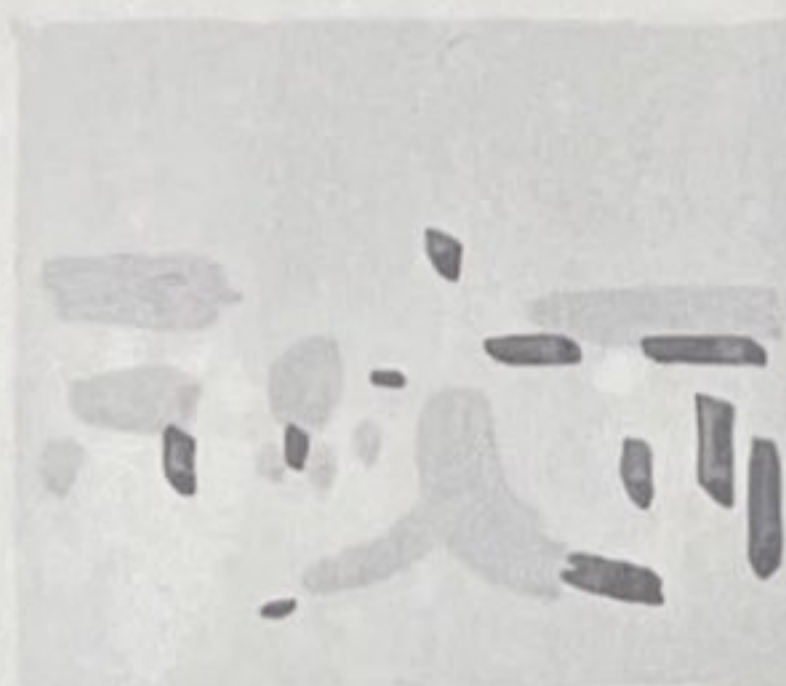
1   2   3   4

5   6   7   8

In these eight diagrams, we have used arbitrary background values. Squint your eyes and see how these diagrams, from one to eight ascend the value scale regardless of the shape or the position of tone. Each of these arrangements contains pure white and solid black. What we want you to understand is this: AREAS of values make over-all tone or key. You do not draw or paint in light value everywhere to have a light key picture. It all depends on HOW MUCH of a value or a tone you use that regulates the total key. It has nothing to do with shapes, forms or subject.

Tone key

Key

of light middle tone —
contrast of action.

Courtesy John Hancock
Mutual Life Insurance Co.

ALBERT DORNE   Colored ink and gouache

BEN STAHL   Oil   Courtesy Woman's Home Companion

ROBERT FAWCETT   Ink wash   By permission Saturday Evening Post © 1947, 1948 Curtis Pub. Co.

Tone key

Dominance

of dark and
rhythm of texture.

Contrast

of value
and dominance
of light.

Tone key

FRED LUDEKENS   Pen and ink

To better help you understand the use of dark and light, we show here several illustrations with a small diagram next to each one. Notice that, fundamentally, the technique of application makes little difference. Sometimes, a technique or a method of working will be selected to better fulfill the requirements of a picture plan and will help greatly to emphasize it. No method of work, however, can fail to include dominance, key, contrast, interval, value, design, and so on. *All of these parts of picture making exist regardless of the physical method of application.*

   Harmony is a major consideration in the use of tone and values and regardless of contrasts, discords, techniques or emphasis, you must have harmony. It is the final result of *your use of* values, contrasts, techniques, etc. We can best explain this by saying that the quick impression of the total picture area should be harmonious. The correct consideration of all of the elements of a picture usually results in a harmonious whole. Consider everything as you develop your picture because a picture is only as good as its weakest part. The line, tone, direction and values may be in contrast — may individually be full of discords, yet nevertheless, collectively, they can be harmonious. The *carefully considered use of dark and light,* with regard to position, areas and dominance—these are probably the most important things to remember with the exception of composition — which of course is the end result, and is inseparable from one or from all other elements.

Interval

of light, darks
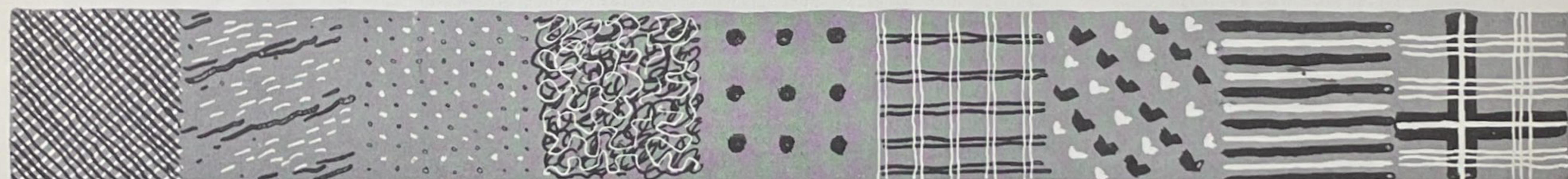and middle value
in pattern.

Tone key

Dark on light

Texture and variety

At the same time you are using a tone or value, it is often desirable to give the value a texture. This amplifies the interpretation of the form or surface you are drawing or painting. Simultaneously, it adds interest and variety to the composition of the picture. The use of texture is a forceful and suggestive tool. By varying the fineness or coarseness of a texture a feeling of depth can be obtained. In actual life we see the texture of a few leaves on a tree that is close to us as a coarse texture; we see a distant forest as a fine texture. You can direct a texture, such as the skin of an orange, to give the illusion of roundness. Or you can use a texture as an interesting way to achieve a value — to keep it from being dull and uninteresting.
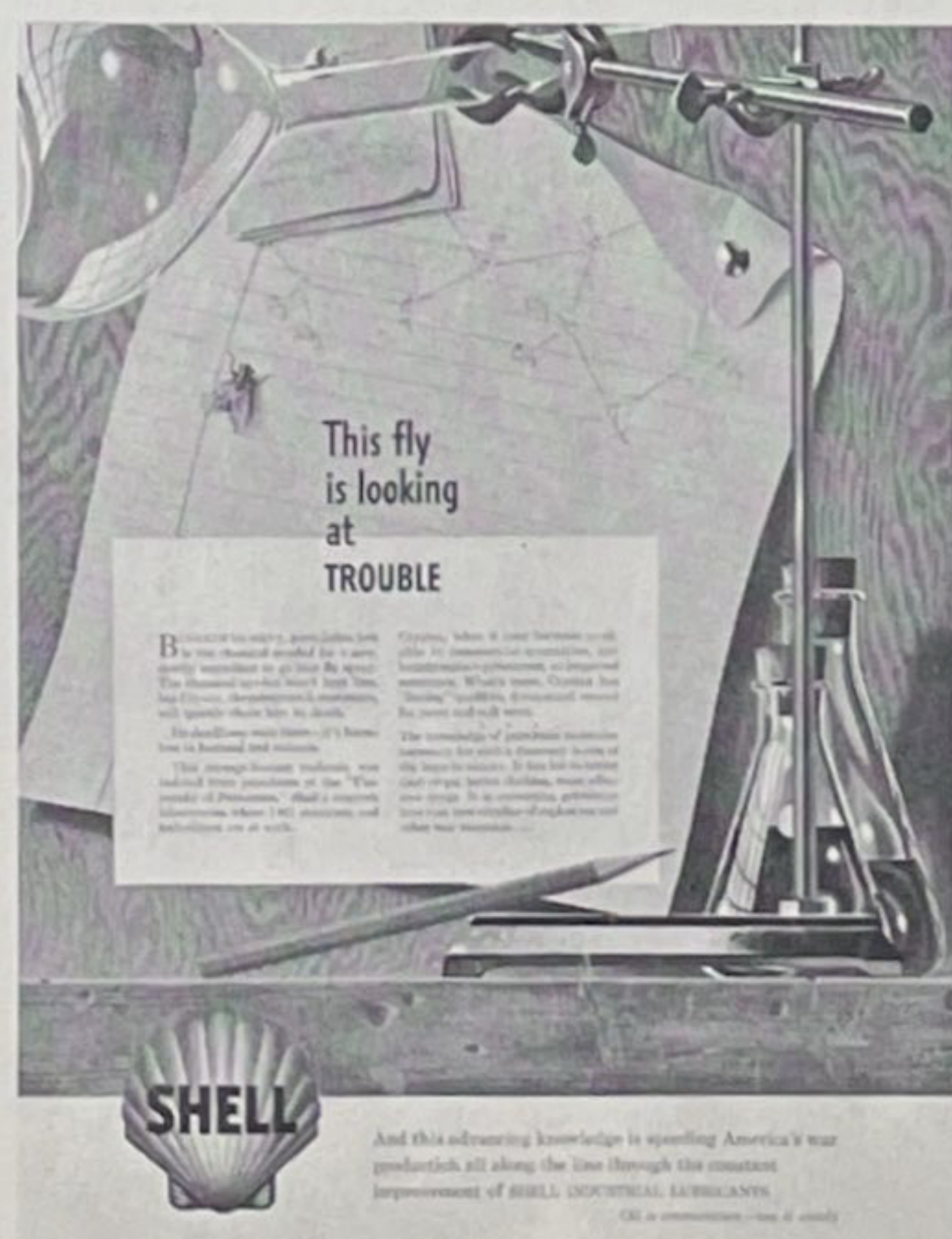
The monotony of surface qualities can often be enhanced by the use of brush strokes, pen lines, dots, crosshatching and so on, or by the character of the paper, canvas, or surface you are working on. Any texture you use has a value in the value scale. Close up, the texture is apparent; place it a short distance from the eye and it begins to blend and you recognize it as a value. *Do not let a texture get out of value* by getting too interested in it as a texture.
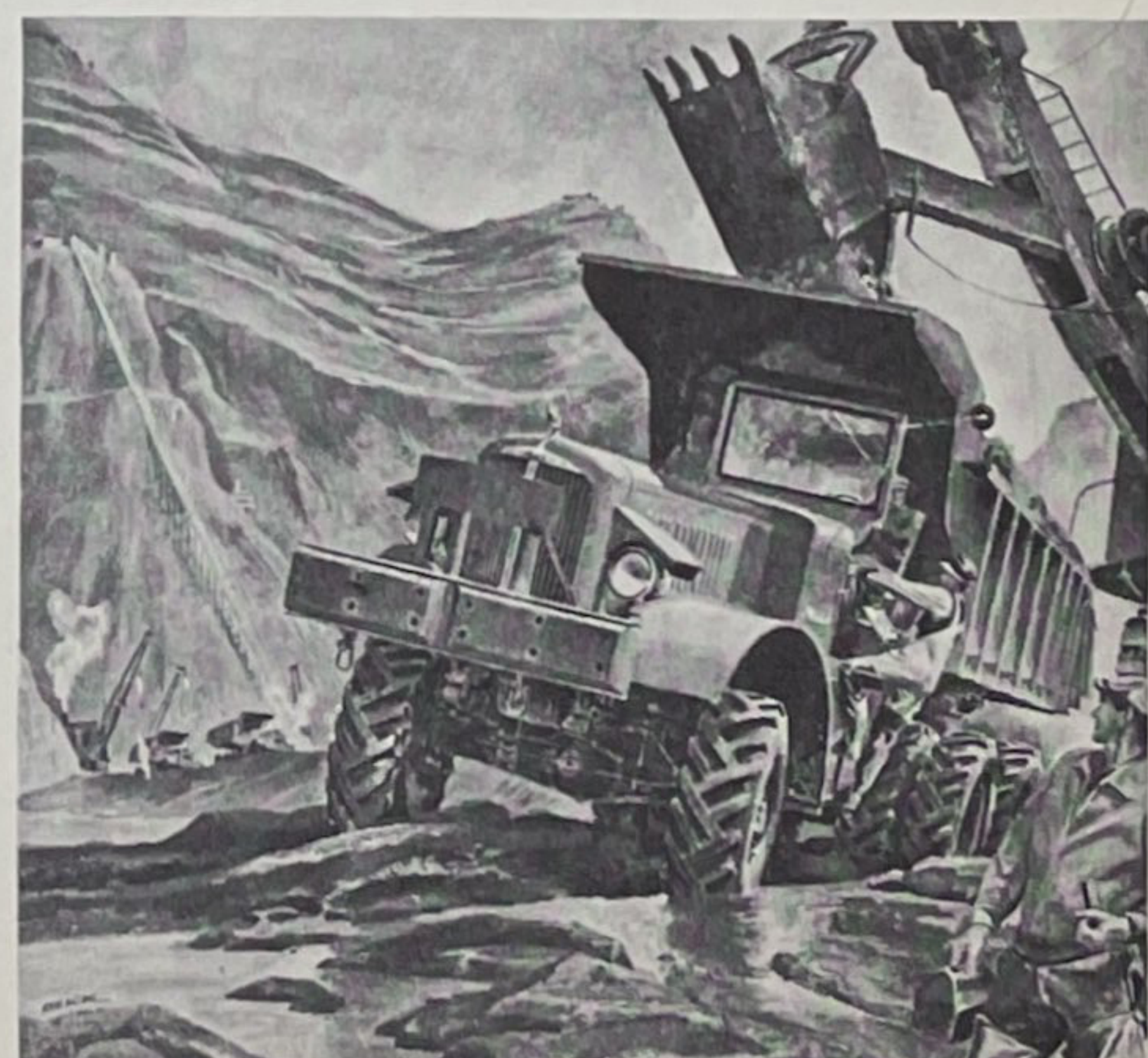

Light on dark

Dark and light on tone

Here are two, good examples of the use of textures and variety.
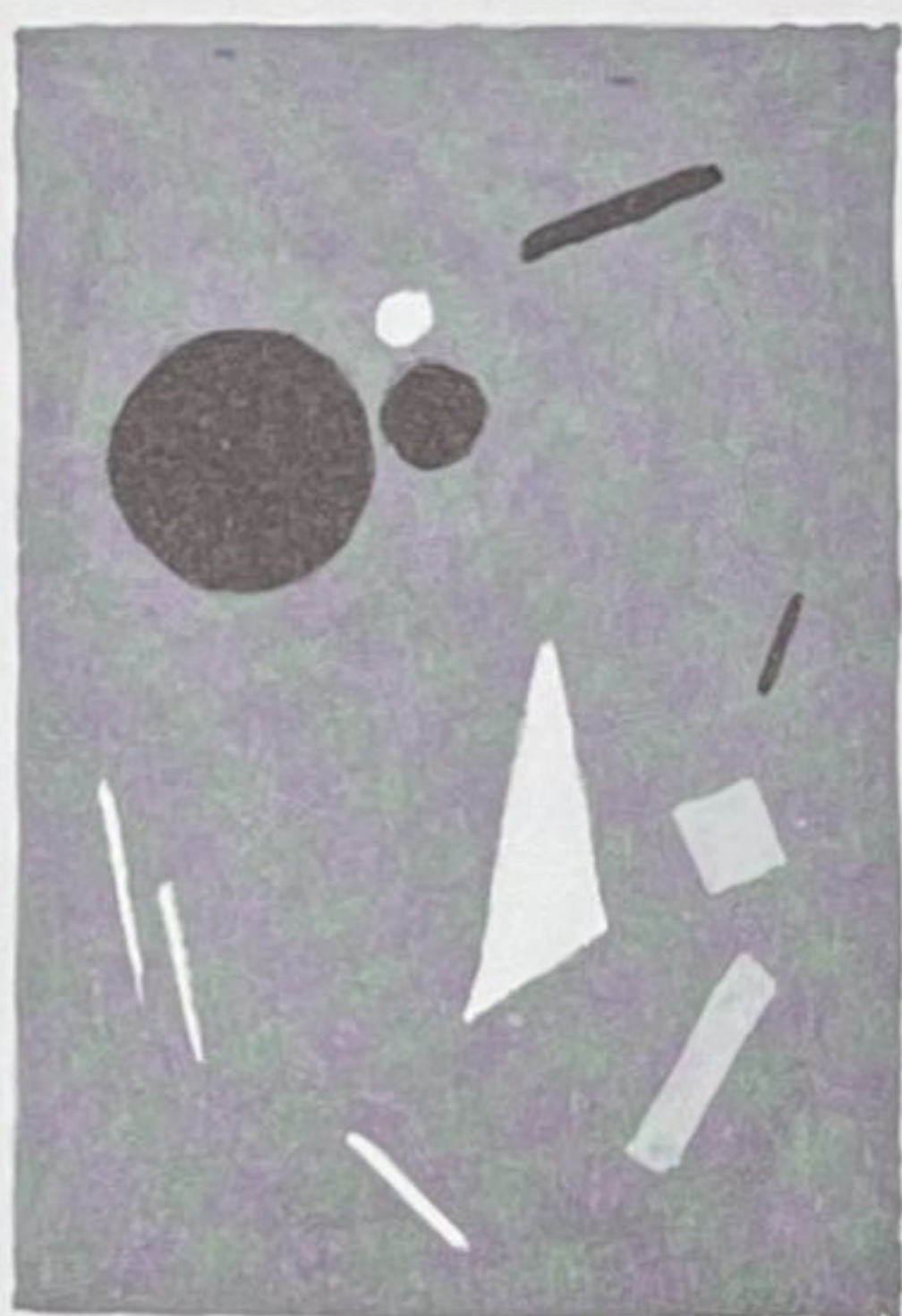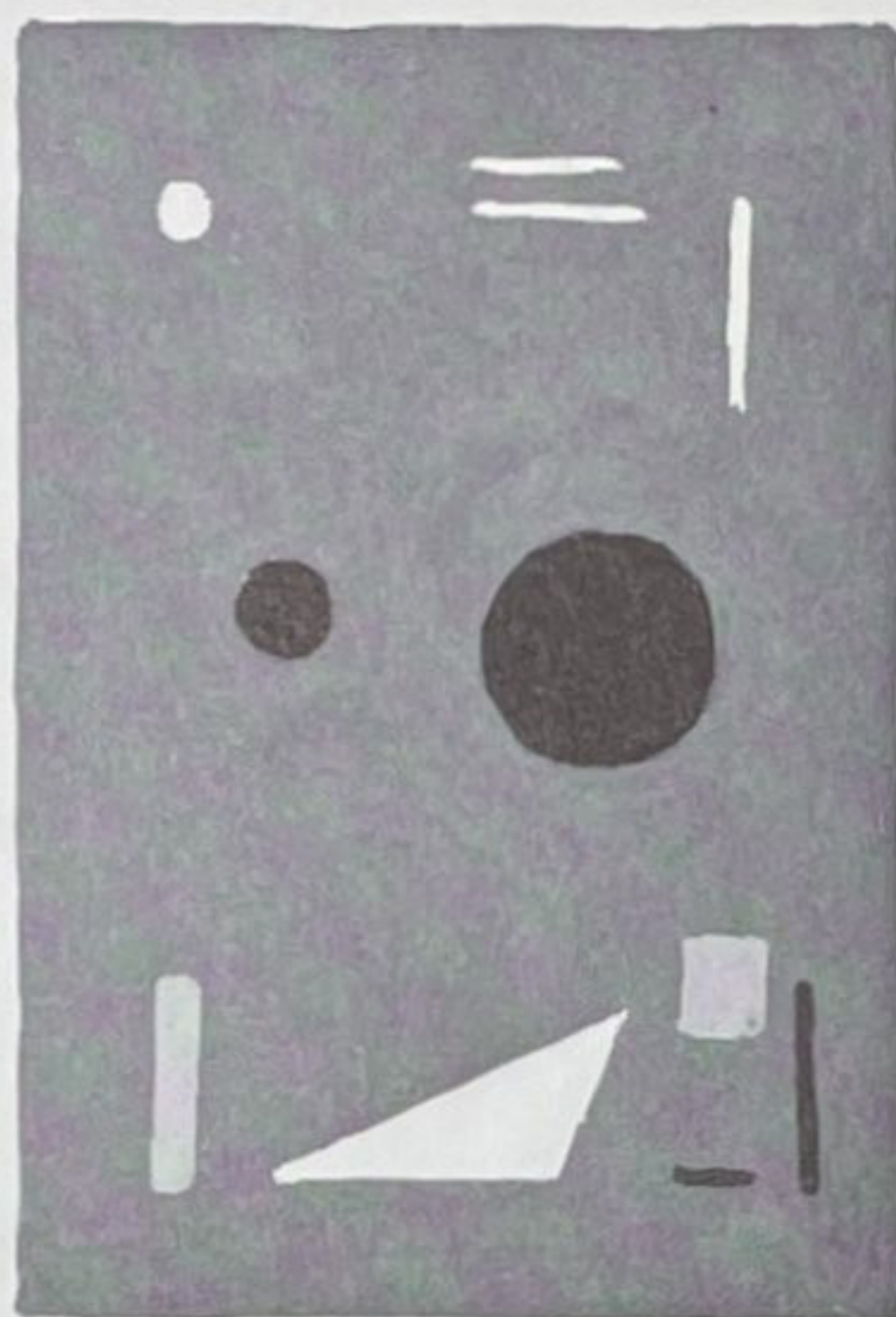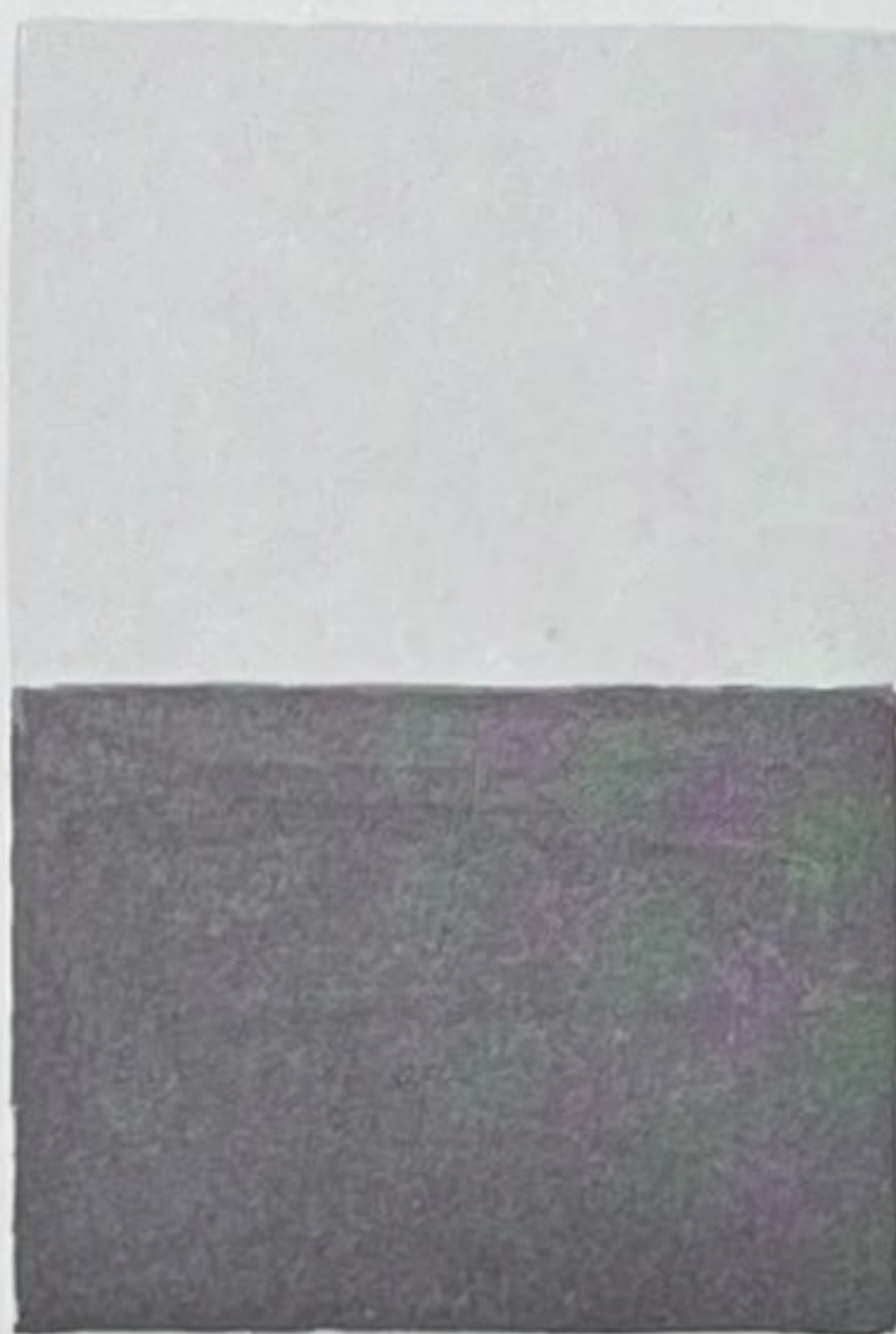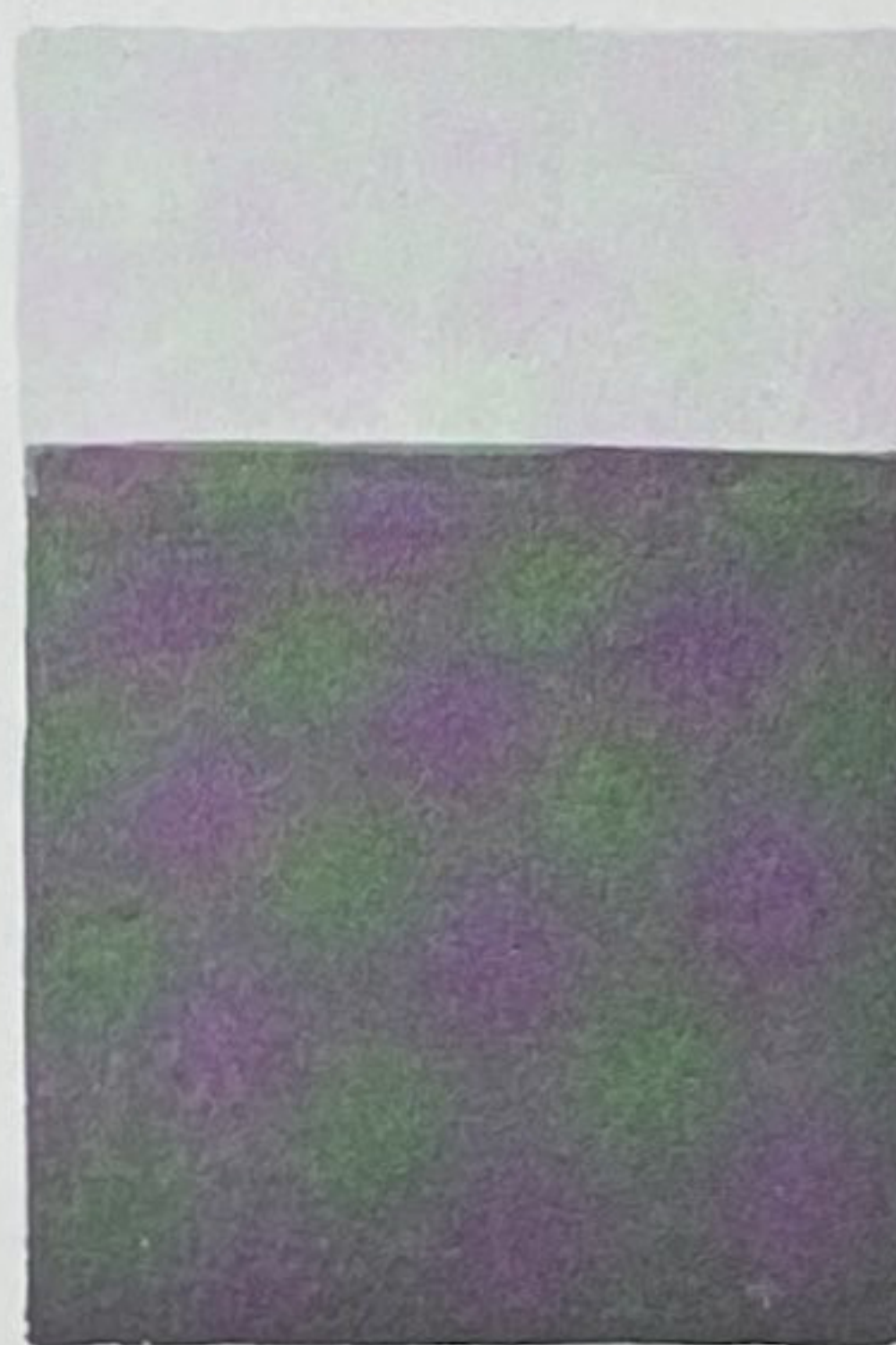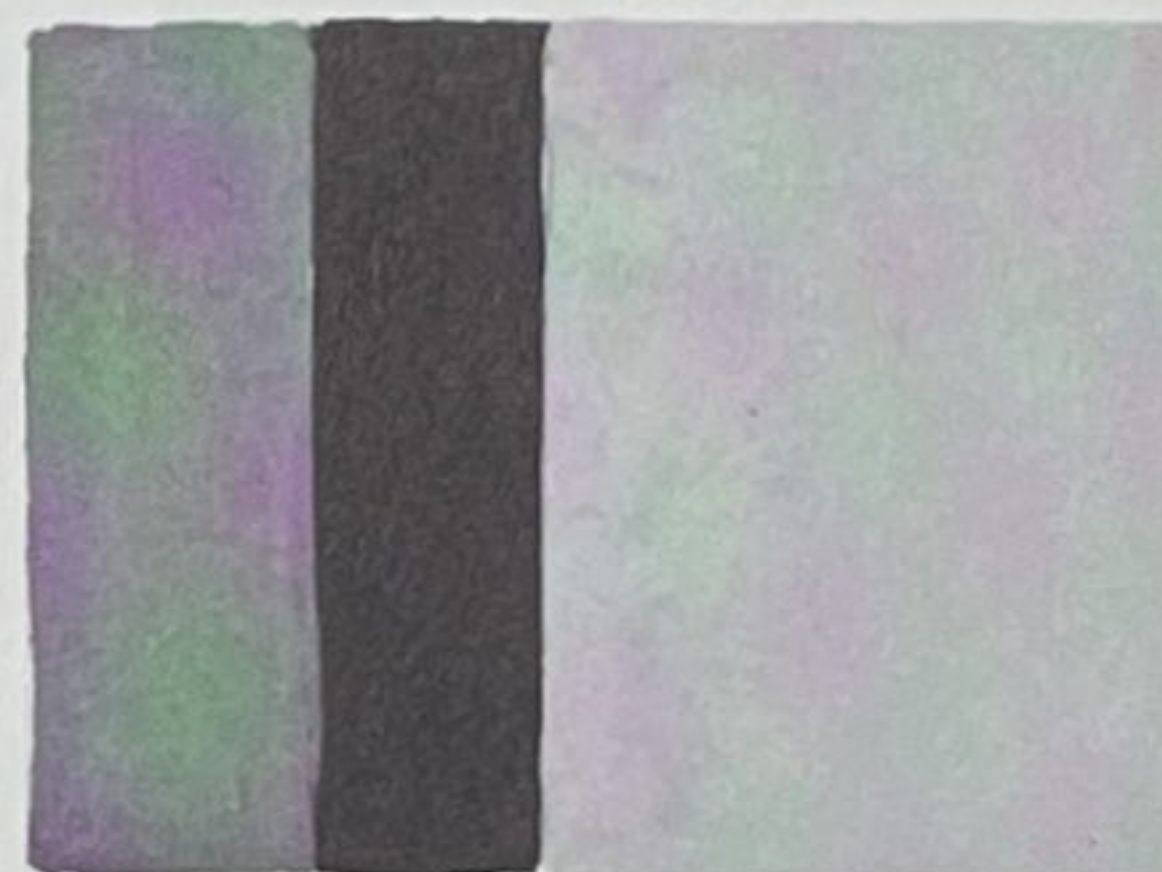
JOHN ATHERTON   Courtesy Shell Oil Co., Inc.

PETER HELCK   Courtesy of Mack Trucks

Plate 1

Notice: This plate contains student work to be returned to the Institute for grading. Put an "X" in the rectangle beside the more appealing design of each pair.

Famous Artists Course

Figure composition — light and dark

Famous Artists Schools, Inc.

Lesson 10

In Lesson 9 we considered such fundamental prob-
lems of composition as balance, scale, rhythm and
unity. We pointed out that the artist cannot be
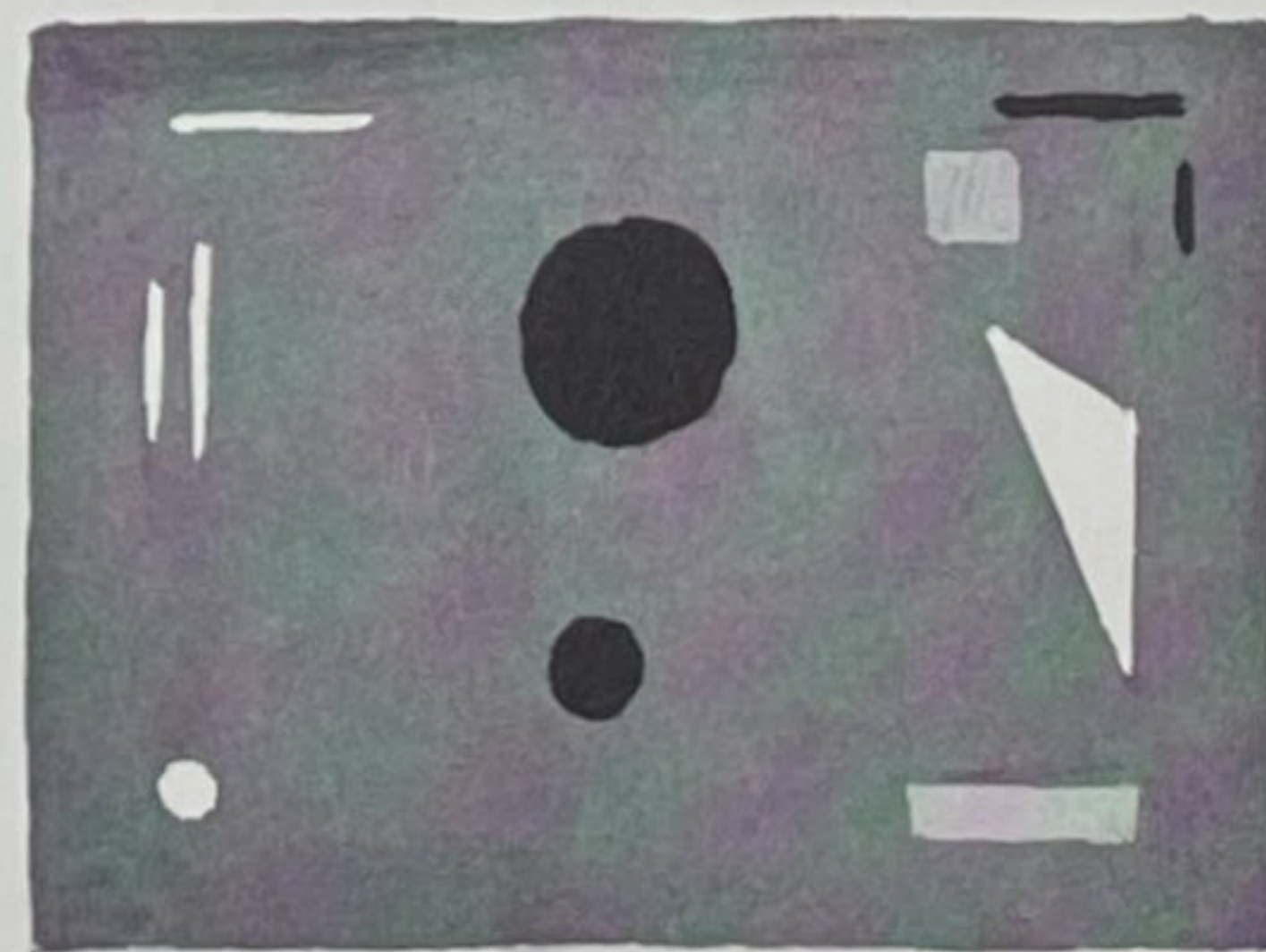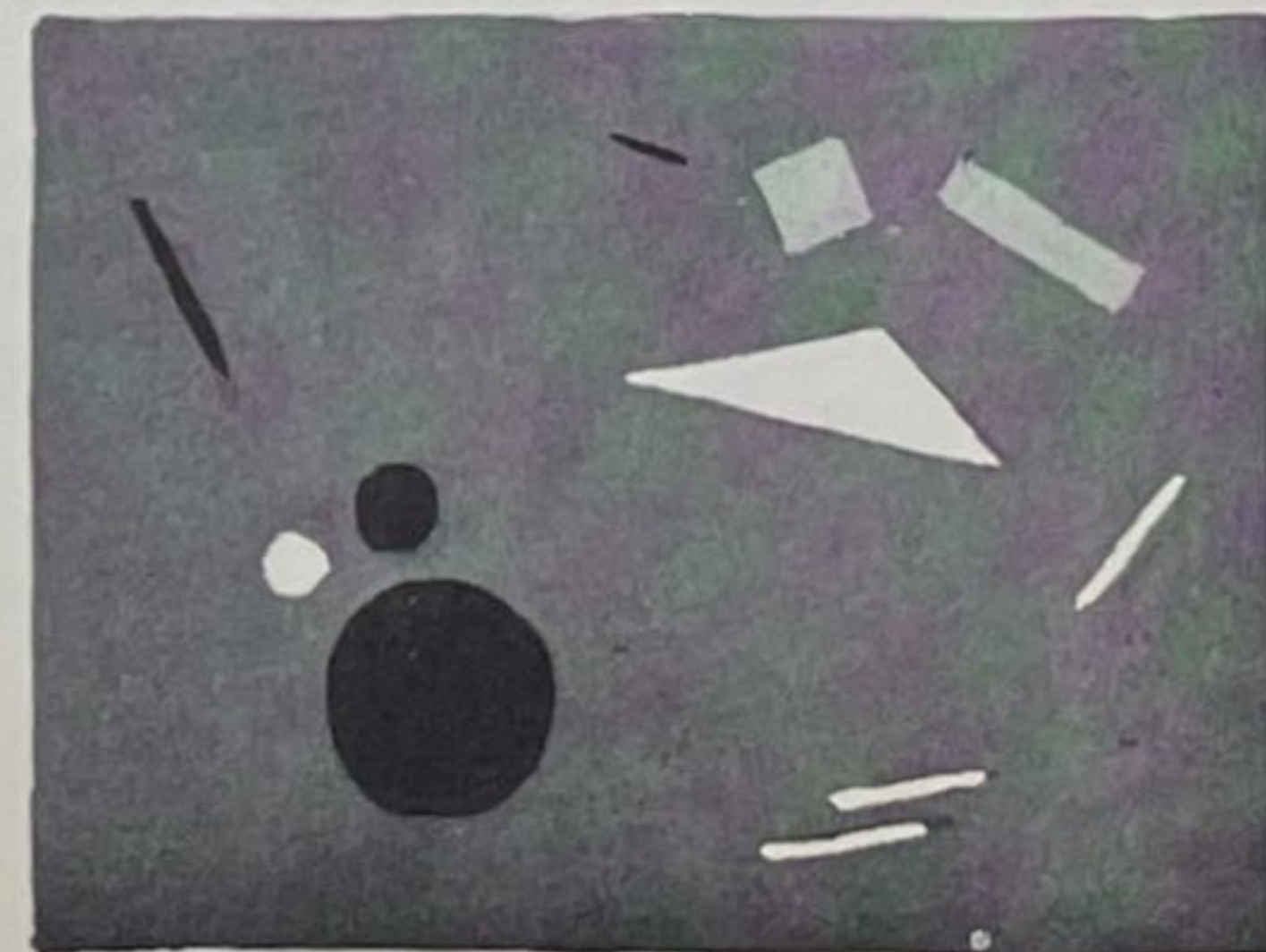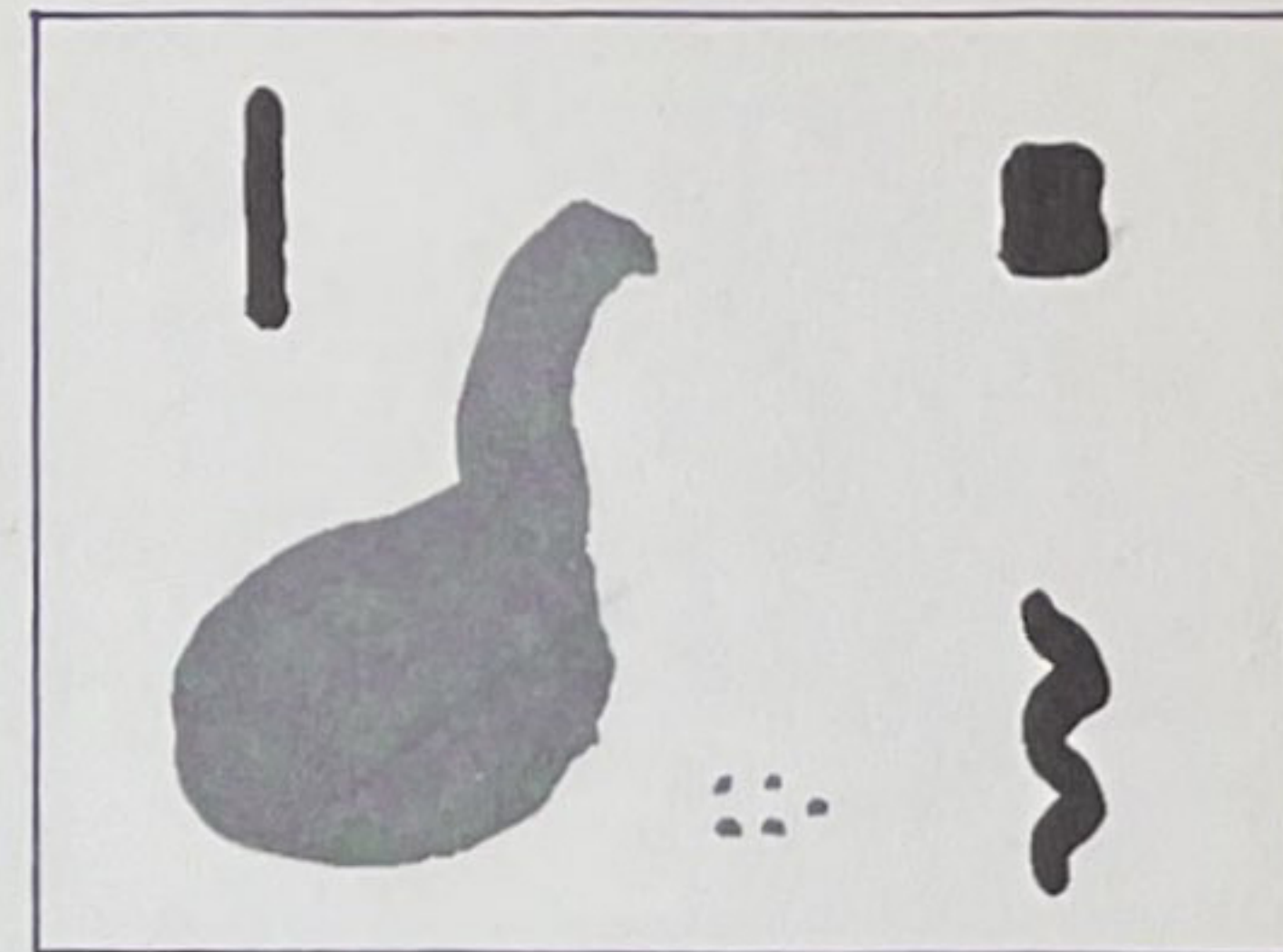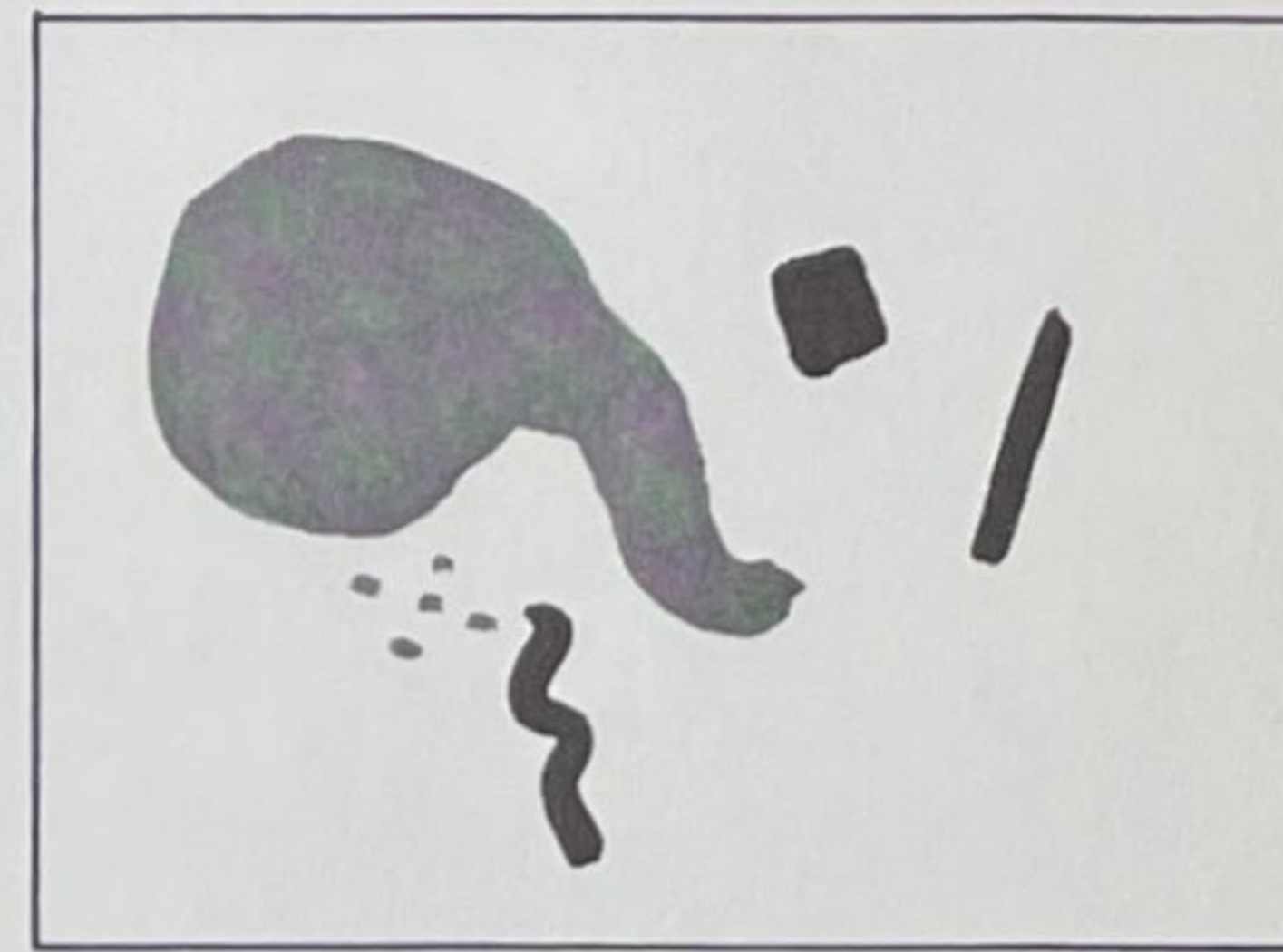content merely to copy down nature pretty much as
he finds it. He must rather select, rearrange and
redesign natural forms very carefully in order to
accomplish definite, premeditated artistic ends.

In this process the real forms of nature undergo
a transformation. They are viewed now in terms
of shape, rhythm, value, texture, bulk and scale.
They are assessed for visual qualities; they be-
come artistic forms under the knowing hands of the
artist. Simplification, exaggeration, even dis-
tortion, may take place. To the average person,
the tree may still look like a tree in nature, the
girl like a girl, the building like a building,
but all these objects now seem more interesting --
or more exciting -- than the same objects in nature
because the artist has made them all work together
to enhance their individual personalities and put
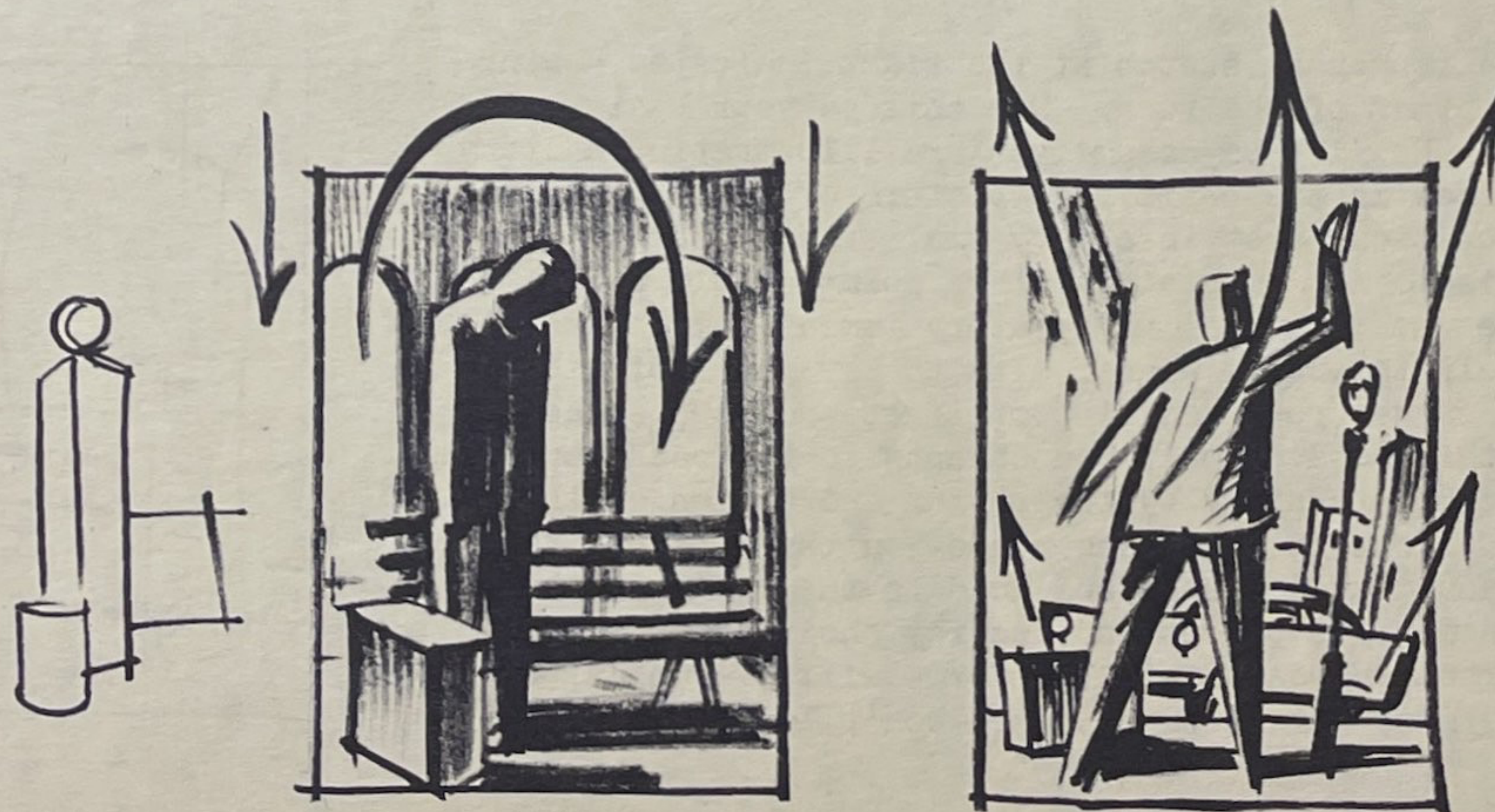across a single message.

Most of the discussion in Lesson 9 was devoted to
the problem of creating a structural pattern with-
in the picture area. For the sake of simplicity,
we dealt in the main with inanimate forms -- like
cups and saucers, gas pumps, water cans, houses,
mountains, trees. Using these objects, attention
and mood can be developed only by the arrangement
of space, the dynamic character of shapes and
lines, contrast of simple values. In short, we
were working with purely aesthetic means that con-
cern the eye alone.

With this present lesson we introduced a different
and much more complicating factor -- emotional
quality that led directly to the creation of mood.
Inanimate forms have no emotional significance in
themselves except through association with human
life. The teakettle cannot smile at the teacup,

nor can the cup hate the kettle, but the instant
the human form enters the picture, mood and emo-
tion enter with it. Inanimate objects immedi-
ately take on some relation with the figure, be-
come secondary elements or "props" which may be
used compositionally and emotionally to reinforce
the mood established by the figure action.

Let's see how this works. Suppose, for example,
we begin with a few forms similar in shape and
bulk to the gas pump, the watering can and the
sign. Let us think of the gas pump as a human
figure, the watering can as a suitcase and the
sign as a bench in a railway station. Now we
can no longer arrange these elements on a purely
aesthetic basis. We must know what mood we want
to create and we must use the inanimate objects
to underscore this mood.

Let us say we want to create an impression of
tragedy or despair. How can we go about cre-
ating this atmosphere? First, begin by choosing
a pose for the figure which reflects this emo-
tion. We think of the words "weighed down,"
overcome by grief. Look at the little rough
composition at the left below. The figure seems
to convey, through pose alone, the emotional
mood we had in mind. This is achieved by simply
bowing the head, the sag against the straight
line. What can we do to strengthen the emotion-
al story through the use of background material
-- here we are using a railway station setting.
We've used its possible arch forms, plus the op-
posing horizontals of the bench, plus the heavy
pattern of light and shadow to heavy-up the at-
mosphere and tightly lock up the action. See how
those arches in the background push downwards,
create a feeling of weight, how we arrest this
action at the bottom by the rigid lines of the
bench. Already the main picture content is
established.

If you study this drawing carefully, you will see that the whole emotional story has been presented even at this early stage. This drawing could be finished with countless details and most careful rendering -- but the finish would say no more about the emotional situation than this simple sketch; it might say even less. From this demonstration, you can see very clearly how important it is to get the basic qualities of the picture right. The essential picture shapes, picture structure, mood symbols and value key are all correct. It would be almost impossible to destroy the message of the painting by later weaknesses -- provided the original ideas are preserved.

Now suppose we want to create a happier, more exciting mood using the same three forms -- perhaps a man hailing a taxi outside the station as in the second sketch (on the preceding page). We begin by setting our attitude in a higher key, the pose of the figure is dynamic, the gesture of the arm creates an upward sweep, the suitcase is a stabilizing form against this action and it contributes less to the picture and seems lighter. The lines of the taxi are designed to echo the sweeping lines of the figure, but also to oppose them in direction to carry the eye back to the starting linear rhythms of the figure. The lamp post on the right and the area of dark on the left creates a V-shaped space which fountains the eye upward. In this drawing, also, the emotional mood and spirit have been set before a single detail is added. The scene is bouncy, active. With this as a start, it would be difficult to miss the quality of elation in making the final painting.

You see, your problems begin here in a similar fashion to those where you were dealing with the inanimate forms for the assignments in Lesson 9, but the multiple problems of emotion and mood give you a great deal more freedom and picture possibility. Again, however, we can't overstress the importance of roughly establishing your shapes in the simplest form possible, then making them move or shift to fit your needs.
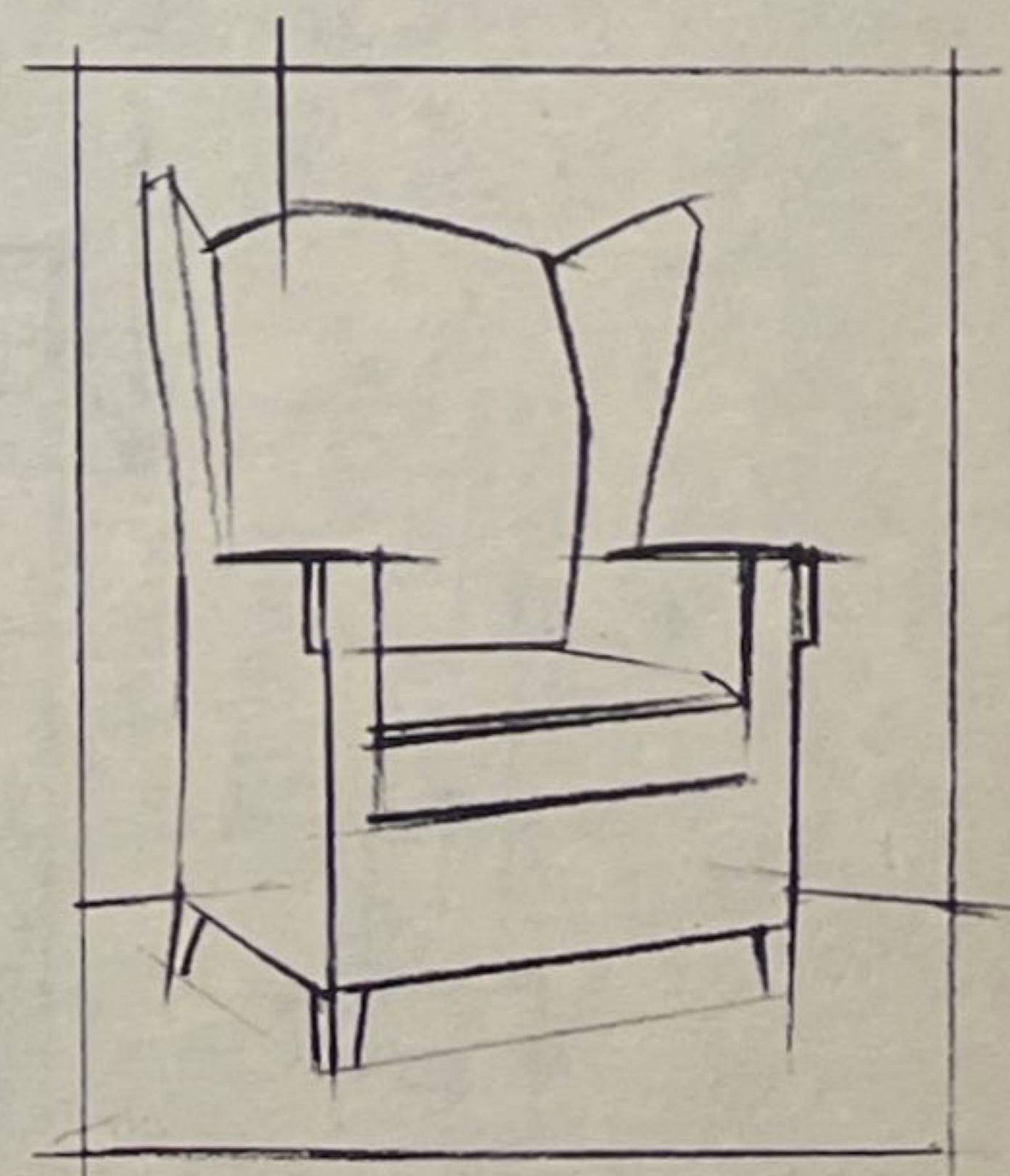
To Study and Practice

Find a number of illustrations which seem to convey a strong sense of mood. Study them carefully and try to find out how the artist managed to get each particular mood across. Analyze his use of figure poses, silhouette, overlapping, relation of figure shapes, relation of figures and props. Is the drawing in a high key or a low key? Are the forms presented as flat tones and outlines, are they modeled with a definite light source, or are they handled realistically with a single light source? What highlights are reflected or reflected lights are present and how do they serve to help the composition? How many distinct textures are employed and how are these controlled?

Throughout the entire Course you should be reading the magazines for which you might want to create illustrations in the future. Such magazines might be: The Saturday Evening Post, Ladies' Home Journal, Redbook, Esquire, True, etc. Read back through the stories to find out what scenes the artist chose to illustrate. You will find usually that these scenes have some definite emotional quality that makes them attractive pictorially. Try to pick out other such scenes that you feel would make good illustration material and work them out simply but thoughtfully in rough form like the ones discussed above. Be sure to try to give even these rough sketches a distinct impact and emotional quality that will get across the mood of the story.

THE ASSIGNMENTS YOU ARE TO SEND IN FOR CRITICISM

ASSIGNMENT 1 - The thumbnail sketch at the right indicates a wing chair set in the corner of the room. Use this as your basic setting and material. Now let us assume you are illustrating a story line, "He sat slumped in the chair, the picture of dejection." Work out the composition first in a very small rough sketch form, 4 x 6 inches in size. All emphasis at this point should be in selecting a figure pose that tells the story immediately. Mentally, project yourself into this scene. Try to key your thinking to the atmosphere, then key your handling of light and your selection of values to set this mood. Don't add objects to the background. Try to tell this complete story by the rhythm and action of the figure and by the effect of light and shadow on these simple forms. Try to establish your large shapes and hold to them. Avoid the tendency to cut them up in pieces and destroy their power and unity. Your internal shapes within the forms will play a large part in such a picture, but control them. Don't let them get out of hand.

Now take this situation -- "He sat forward on the edge of the chair, eager, attentive." Using the same logical sequence, try to interpret this scene for what it is worth. The atmosphere should be lighter, keyed higher. There should be a feeling of tension, of expectancy. The composition should have unity, but should be much more explosive. The basic difference is similar to the man and suitcase sketches but, of course, the scene is different and the one prop must assist the story because you, the creator, have designed the action within it to best make use of its possibilities.

Take the best of these small roughs and finish one of each in either wash or opaque. Line both of these picture up on a single piece of illustration board 11 x 14 inches and incidentally, make sure, in doing your preliminary sketches, that you are drawing within an area of the same shape as the finished painting is to be. Keep this entire rendering problem as simple as possible. This gives you a chance to develop an atmosphere through light and shadow and to relate your arbitrary figure action to a fixed form.

Mark this board -- ASSIGNMENT 1.

ASSIGNMENT 2 - We have printed below two simple outline sketches of two different groups of simple basic forms. To exercise you again in that necessary business of thinking simple shapes into active story-telling pictures, we would like you to develop two compositional sketches containing figures and illustrating the scene.

Don't make finished renderings of these compositions. They should be submitted to us in a degree of finish similar to the sketches demonstrating the station and taxi scenes on Page 1 of these assignment sheets.

In #1 you see a bottle, a box-like shape and a gourd or squash-like formation in the background. Using these forms as your points of departure, develop in sketch form a scene, somewhat sad in atmosphere, of a boy of about 12 and his mother outside a small railway station. The squarish
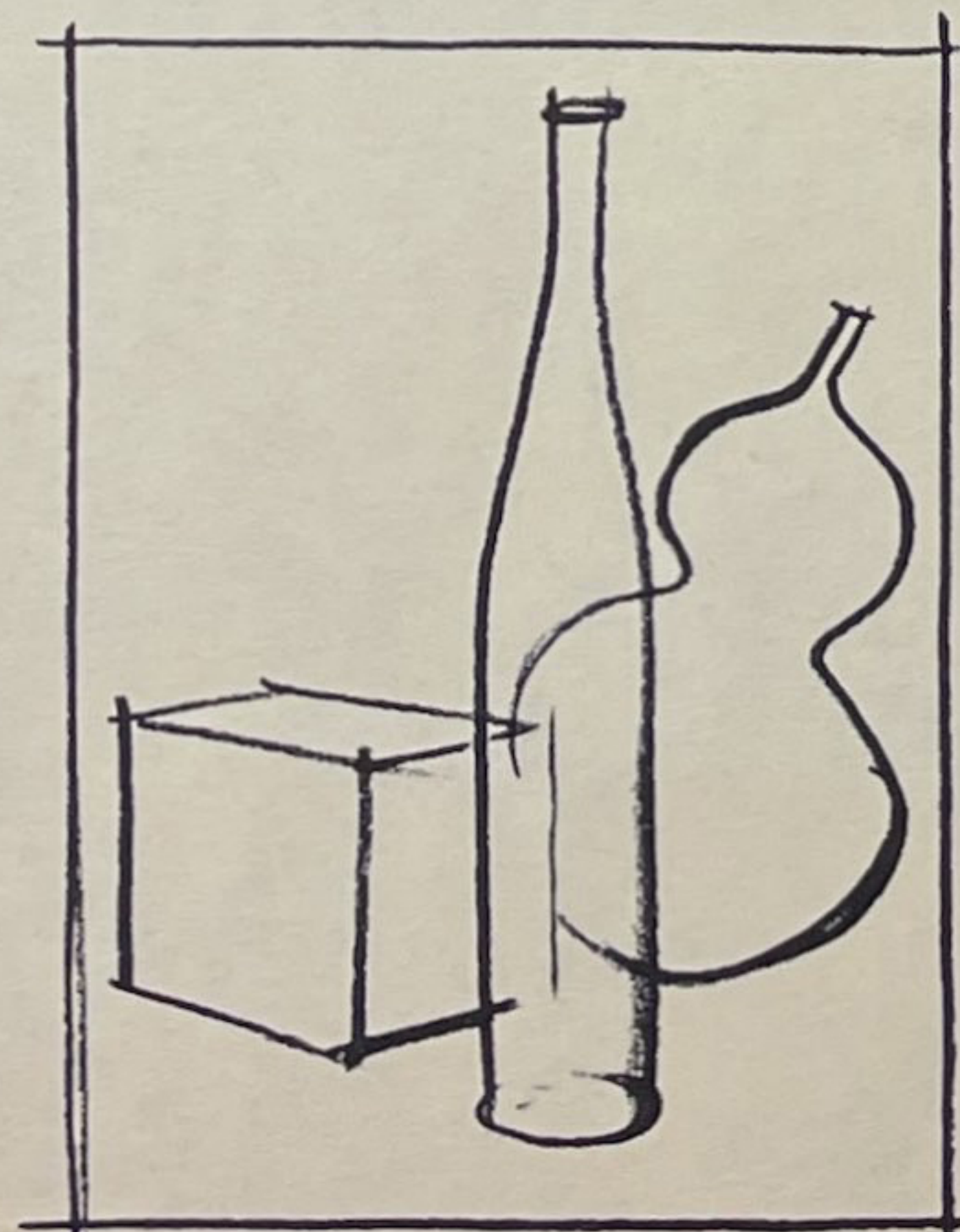
form should be a trunk. The boy is leaving home for the first time to attend a residence school. He's unhappy; the mother a bit worried. Try to create this feeling. It's the feeling that we're interested in. Reread through this instruction sheet from the beginning again before starting this assignment. You will find it helpful in defining your approach. In setting the scene, use only enough of the station to suggest the locale. Concentrate on the figures, their attitudes, possibilities of light and shade and their shape in relation to each other and to the picture to tell your story.

In the second picture, a horizontal composition, you see roughly suggested the long, more or less crescent shape of a piece of watermelon, the bulk form of a pear in the foreground, the suggestion of a mat beneath them. Make this a beach scene -- the elongated shape the mother reclining on the beach, the pear shape a youngster seated playing with a pail in the foreground with the mother stretched out on a blanket. Try for a feeling of lightness, relaxation, playfulness and quiet, and again carry it to the degree of finish suggested for the sketches demonstrating the station and taxi sequence. Do these sketches in ink or pencil on visualizing paper. You may have to make several. You should. Don't be afraid to arrange and rearrange. These outlines are not to restrict you -- just to start you thinking in simple shapes. Choose the best of each, cut them out and mount them on a sheet 11 x 14 inches. The size of your rectangles should be in proportion to the outline sketches indicated.
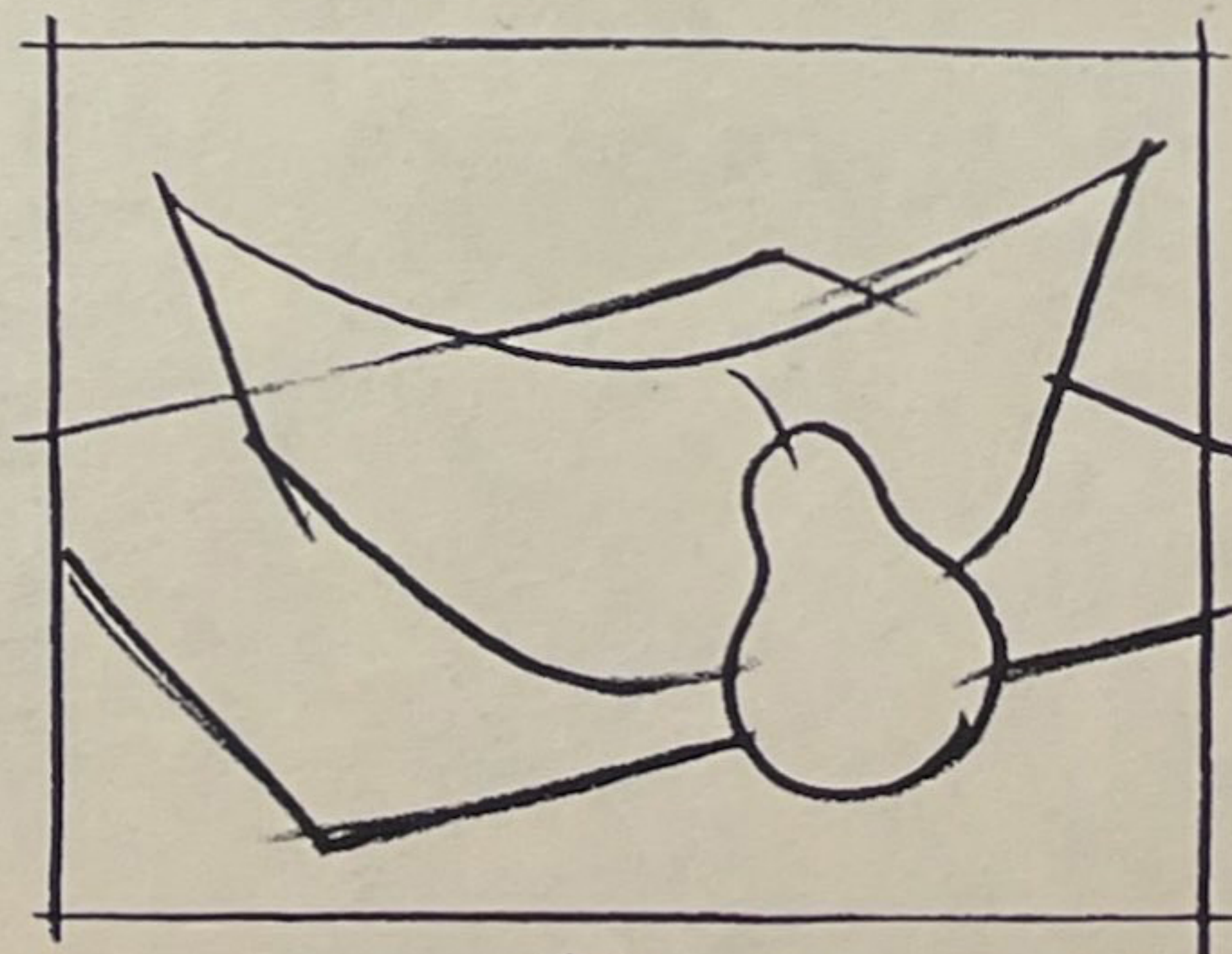
Mark this sheet -- ASSIGNMENT 2.

IMPORTANT. Letter your name, address and student number in the lower left-hand corner of each drawing. In the lower right corner, place the Lesson Number and Assignment Number. For criticism and grading, mail ASSIGNMENTS 1 and 2 to:

FAMOUS ARTISTS COURSE
Westport, Conn.

C-210C

#1

#2